


**The James Houston
Eccleston Day-book,
Containing a Short
Account of his Life &
Readings ... Chosen
From his Sermons;**



JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON, SAMUEL
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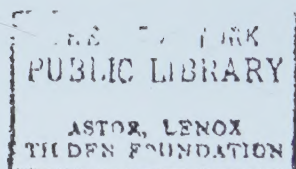
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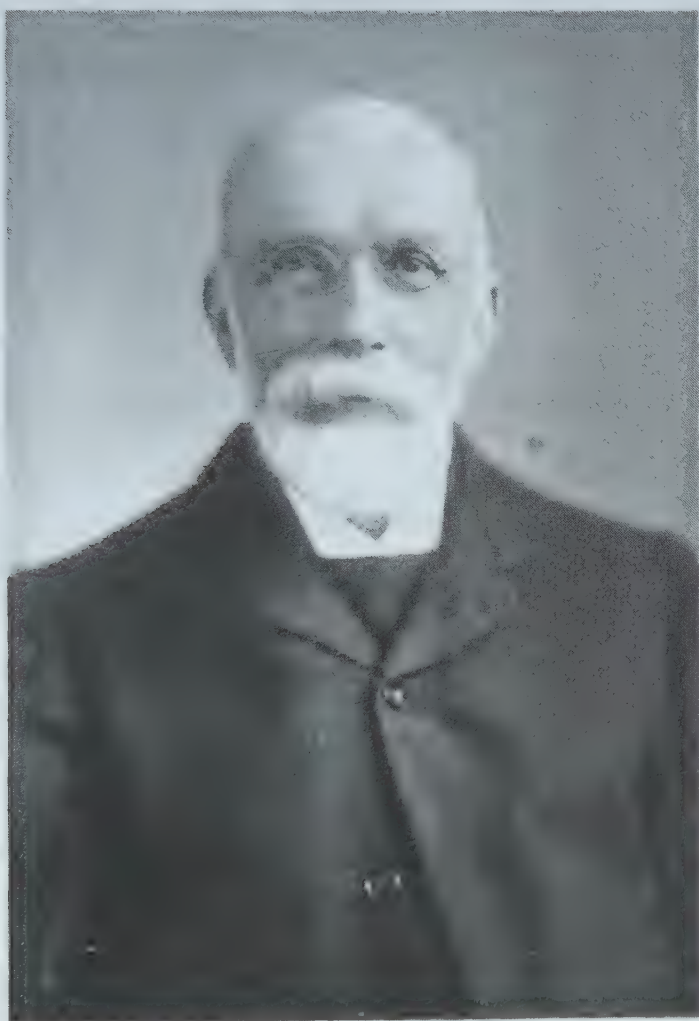
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THE
JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON
DAY-BOOK

SOMETIMES a biography comes to us almost as a Gospel of Hope—ours to rebuke us, and ours to help us: ours to condemn us, and ours to sustain us, the mighty influence of an earnest, true and believing life.

J. H. E.





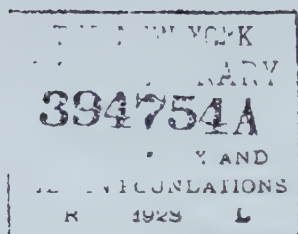
L. Houston Eccleston

THE
JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON
DAY-BOOK

CONTAINING A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF HIS LIFE, AND READINGS
FOR EVERY DAY IN THE YEAR
CHOSEN FROM HIS SERMONS

COMPILED BY
SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER, JR.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.
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CLUB
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THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED TO
THE PEOPLE OF EMMANUEL CHURCH
BALTIMORE
WHOSE OWN HE WAS



FOREWORD

HIS was a life too busy and too humble to take thought for leaving its record anywhere but in the lives of others. The sermons of Dr. Eccleston are the only written source of knowledge about him: and the condition of the manuscripts is such as to make their publication impossible. But there are passages of striking helpfulness in them, which seem to me to reveal his personality, and to instance his peculiar charm of diction: and from these I have taken the quotations which follow.

With the advice and encouragement of the Bishop of Maryland, and the Reverend Hugh Birckhead, D.D., I have thus endeavored to meet, in some measure, the desire of Dr. Eccleston's friends for some memoir of him.

I must acknowledge my thanks to his sister, Miriam Eccleston Harper, for corrections in the biography: and to her son, S. Eccleston Harper, for help in compiling the book.

S. M. S., JR.



JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON

JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON was born in Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland, May 10, 1837. He was the fourth child, and second son, of Judge John Bowers Eccleston and Augusta Chambers Houston, daughter of Judge James Houston. His family seems to have been English in every branch; and the names Houston, Bowers, Forman and Chambers are among those of his immediate forebears. Throughout his writings are repeated references of pride and respect to the "English-speaking people." Such of his family as were professional men were, for the most part, lawyers and clergymen; and it would seem that Dr. Eccleston inherited his interest in the law, and the discerning mind which helped make him, in later years, an authority on Church canon.

One day as I stood looking at a picture of his father, Dr. Eccleston said to me, "Mother used to say that Father's swear-words were 'Dear! Dear!!' and that when he got specially

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excited he wiggled his watch-chain." Judge Eccleston was a quiet man, resolute, kindly and composed. It is characteristic of him that his old-time ideas of hospitality and Christian courtesy would never countenance on the part of his children criticism of any person who had sat at his table. His half-brother was Samuel Eccleston, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Baltimore.

From Mrs. Eccleston came the more genial side of Dr. Eccleston's nature, his humor, his interest in life, and much of his knowledge of it, and it is interesting to know that the mother of this preacher and teacher had an unusual gift of teaching. His elder brother, Samuel, died at the age of fourteen; and Judge Eccleston writes that only a few days before his death he had declared his intention of entering the ministry. We cannot tell how much the desire to carry out the hopes of this brother inclined Dr. Eccleston in his later decision when he took up that work himself. There was also the influence of his half-brother, the Rev. Dr. John Clarkson Eccleston, between whom and himself there was always, through their long lives, the most profound respect and love.

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He attended Washington College, in Chestertown, for a while; but the records there have since been burned, and the dates of his course are not known. He then went to Princeton, where he was graduated a Bachelor of Arts in the class of 1856, together with Dr. Samuel Chew and his cousin, Judge Wickes, of Baltimore. He studied law after his graduation from Princeton. The state of his health forced Dr. Eccleston to abandon his studies temporarily, and he served for some time as a route agent between Baltimore and Wheeling, West Virginia, for the Adams Express Company, of which his brother-in-law, Samuel M. Shoemaker, was one of the founders. He always declared that the knowledge of human nature he gained in that work was of the greatest value to him in later life, and used to say that if he were Dean of a Seminary he would make every candidate take a year on the street-car, as a conductor, for the same purpose.

Under date of 1889, Dr. Eccleston writes, "Thirty years ago, Mr. Richardson, then Superintendent of this (Emmanuel) Sunday School, came after me and interested me in this work. Under God I trust I passed from it to

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the sacred ministry, and that by very direct routes." During the Civil War he went to Hampton, Virginia, under the auspices of the "Christian Mission," to nurse the wounded. He succumbed, himself, to typhoid fever, and was brought to Baltimore, where he suffered a very severe illness.

His long service of forty-seven years to the Church began when, after preparation at the Philadelphia Divinity School, he was made deacon in St. Paul's Church, Baltimore, on Trinity Sunday and St. Barnabas Day, June 11, 1865. His was the largest class ever ordained by the late Bishop Whittingham, of Maryland. On the first of June, 1866, in Philadelphia, he was ordained a priest at the hands of Bishop Vail, of Kansas.

His first rectorship was at St. Matthew's Church, Philadelphia, from January 21, 1866, till 1870. He was made rector of the Church of the Saviour, in the same city, March 19, 1871, and was there until December, 1876. During this time Griswold College gave him the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology. Dr. Eccleston always kept up his connection with these Philadelphia churches, and some of his life-long friend-

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ships were formed during this period. At the time of his death a most appreciative tribute to his memory was published in the parish paper of the Church of the Saviour, with some account of his labors there, and the unfailing remark upon his genius for sympathy and pastoral care.

He was then called to Trinity Church, Newark, New Jersey; and, for an account of his ministry there, I can do no better than to print a letter from the late rector of that church, Dr. Louis Shreve Osborn, dated May 22, 1911:

"Dr. Eccleston came to Trinity, Newark, in January, 1877, and remained until December, 1883, precisely seven years. During his rectorship the church was altered, repaired and renovated, a recess chancel built, and the organ removed from the western gallery to its present position in the chancel. A new chapel was erected at Harrison to replace the old one (a mission of Trinity), a Sunday School started in a building on Clark Street, which was the beginning of what is now St. James Church.

"Of the fourteen rectors who have served Old Trinity from 1746 to the present day, none was more beloved than J. Houston Eccleston. I

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formed his acquaintance thirty-five years ago, while a student in the Philadelphia Divinity School. He was then rector of the Church of the Saviour, which he left in 1877 to come to Newark. He was in Newark at the opening of our new parish house on the 28th of February last, and dined with me. I have never seen him looking better. His death was a great shock to us all, and a distinct personal loss to myself, who always felt I had in him a true and loyal friend. I went to Baltimore for his funeral service to testify to our affection, as a parish, for so noble and so good a man."

From Newark he came to Emmanuel Church, Baltimore, where he served for twenty-seven years, and did his largest work. To recount these so recent labors were to mar them; for we all have personal remembrances of him which are far more precious than anything that can be written in a book.

On the eleventh of January, 1887, he was married to Helen McLeod Whitridge, the daughter of Joshua Barker Whitridge, of Charleston. Mrs. Eccleston had lived for many years with her uncle, Thomas Whitridge, at his place, "Tivertonia," by the side of Druid Hill Park,

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whither Dr. Eccleston's early morning horseback rides frequently brought him for breakfast. The marriage was performed by Dr. John C. Eccleston in Emmanuel Church. Their short married life of only six years was an ideally happy one. Of the same deeply spiritual nature as her husband, Mrs. Eccleston was well fitted to help him in his work at Emmanuel, wherein lay their common interests. She died in August, 1893.

Princeton University conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon him in June, 1904.

In 1909 Dr. Eccleston celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary as rector of Emmanuel; and the endowment fund of Emmanuel Church was started at that time.

On March 27, 1911, occurred the accident which caused his death. His condition did not at first seem so serious, and within a few hours of the accident he was joking about automobiles: one of his remarks was, "one of those things pretty nearly put this old Parson out of business." When some of his family arranged to stay with him, he characteristically said, "It strikes me one old man is giving lots of folks a heap of trouble."

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But only a very few days before, he had gone to Bishop Murray in great discouragement, and told him that he felt his strength was failing, and he could not properly keep up his work. His first words to the Bishop, who came to see him after the accident were, "Maybe this is the solution of it. He knows best about it, and we must leave it in His hands." On Saturday morning, April first, his sufferings were at an end, and he had entered into life eternal. So passed this man: and was it not the plan of Him whom he had served so well?

His last days were an inspiration to all who were with him at the time. His bravery under intense suffering, and constant consideration for those about him, his readiness to go, were, indeed, characteristic of the whole of his life, and never did he cease to be the same "parson" that he had been throughout.

"Parson" he was generally called by his intimates, — and, who that knew him did not feel that they were his very own? — and often he signed himself "O. L. D. Parson." His pastoral influence extended far beyond the official limits of his parish. Many a time one saw his carriage emerge from a small side street, where,

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far down, perhaps, he had carried some message of cheer, and brought the Spirit of his Master. It was while he was bent on just such an errand that the fatal accident occurred to him.

His supreme ability was to come to people in doubt and trouble and to help them with an understanding love, born of his own experience, and the Spirit of Him who was acquainted with grief. In his many-sided contact with men he never forgot the dignity of his office. But his common interests with every-day people made him a trusted adviser in practical matters, and a genial companion among men of varied types. He walked with Bishops, and counted among his real friends guides and cooks in the Yellowstone, who found in this cultured man of God a good companion for a long journey in the woods. His pleasures and recreations were carefully chosen, always with a view to helping his work. He was a good judge of horses, and always took keen interest in them, and continued to ride nearly every day until the last year of his life when — he said — both he and his horse were lame. Good pictures were a source of great pleasure to him, and he had about him many fine etchings and engravings. One day I went

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into the rectory, and saw a new etching: "Shh!" he said, "I saw it and got it, but I ain't telling anybody." He constantly denied himself these little luxuries, but enjoyed them like a boy.

To the general Church Dr. Eccleston was most known through his work on the Board of Missions, which he served continuously for nearly thirty-four years. The Church's work in far-off lands was always specially dear to his heart. Since 1886 he had represented the Diocese of Maryland in the General Convention, and for years was Chairman of the Committee on Canons in the House of Deputies. For nineteen years he was a member of the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maryland, and was President of that body at the time of his death. "The Churchman" said of him, "In Dr. Eccleston's death the Church has lost a judicious ecclesiastical statesman and a large-hearted priest who will long be remembered for his devotion alike to the extension and to the peace of the Church." He was also well known in England, where he had many friends.

Dr. Eccleston, I believe, never thought, indeed, never desired that his biography should be written, or any of his sermons published.

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The only record of his every-day life which we have is a very brief one, where during his later years, he had jotted down dates and notes of his services. This was intended for his own use, and here, — and sometimes written hurriedly across the back of his sermons, — is the only place where we may have any glimpse into his own personal feeling. The ledger which he used for this purpose is full of comments about his work, some abounding in his unfailing humor, many more filled with pathetic sadness, and fear of failure. Who can tell how difficult it was for him to bear up when he wrote "Dec. 31, 1903 — Watch-Meeting. Close to a failure"; or what trouble he had had with the sermon of which he said, "Sermon on Amos. Poor Amos! sorry for him and me." And it seems indeed a strange coincidence that the last note in the record, written the day before he was hurt, should have been, "Humphries — a dandy on Thomas, 'Let us go die with Him.'"

I dare not try to measure the life of a man like this: and it is difficult to characterize. His influence was so broad, so simple, so really helpful, that we cannot know where its bounds lay. Somehow people did not forget him, and

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he did not forget them. A man of great humbleness of heart, he never sought honors, and even underrated his own powers. A man of deep conviction and intellectual power, he never forced his ideas except by example. A man intolerant of wrong and injustice, he was never critical of men, and consistently gave them encouragement rather than censure. Withal he was firm and just; and those who have sought his counsel know that a strict loyalty to right pervaded his sympathy, and guided his advice.

And so he has gone. And yet his spirit is among us still; and his influence will go on to children's children; and many a life which knew him not will be better and stronger because he lived.

THE JAMES HOUSTON ECCLESTON DAY-BOOK

JANUARY FIRST

“Whom say ye that I am?” The question has come before, it will come again. It will come in the threat to your home of want and need; it will come in the appeal of plenty, it will come with the shadow of sorrow, it comes in the light of joy, it comes in the jargon of dispute, it comes in the songs of praise, it comes in the chill of death, it comes in the privilege of lengthened days. Whom say ye that I am?

Men may feast and dance and sing in crowds, and have fun. They may toil and delve and labor in crowds, and make money. They may hurrah and vote in crowds. But to make a Christian, — that is between the individual and his Saviour.

JANUARY SECOND

Obey the call of the Leader to come out from the easy drudgery of slavery into the freedom of the struggle and hardship of those who, with God

JANUARY

Almighty and His Son, battle against evil, and march towards the righteousness of God.

JANUARY THIRD

Through the strange medley of sounds in human life there is no note so persistent, so constant, and so unhushed as the prayer of a human heart to the God above us; the longing and the hope for the better life; the promise and confidence of somehow a triumph in the Lord.

The first to pray to the crucified Saviour, and the first ever to hear an individual promise of bliss, was the man crucified with Him, dying justly, but penitent.

JANUARY FOURTH

Men tell us the best way to learn the power of sin is to go through it, feel its slime, feel its folds about us, have it drag us down into misery and wretchedness, besmirch the heart and life, and taint and cripple the will and conscience, and so know the evil of sin. And they are true. It will teach it, as murder taught Cain, and his guilt taught Judas—one a vagabond and the other a suicide; a brutal, bitter lesson

JANUARY

with one frightful characteristic, without any hope of ever doing or being better. The Spirit of God has another lesson. It does not tell us how black we are by showing us a shade darker; it does not show us what a moral dwarf we are by putting another cripple there. It shows it by the perfected strength of the Son of God.

JANUARY FIFTH

No man ever took a new stand, none ever deliberately arrayed himself on the side of right, and formed new resolutions of living and doing, but that in a little while it seemed to him all the forces of evil were let loose to defeat him. A man who moves with the crowd finds matters immensely different when he tries to move against it.

The Christ stood in the dim light of a breaking morning: let us be thankful if He is sometimes with us when our eyes are held.

JANUARY SIXTH

Strength is only power well used and wisely applied. What was it which miraculous light showed to men of old, but *wise* men? It was a

JANUARY

little Child. Yes, and it was a holy family: and that is after all your strength.

JANUARY SEVENTH

If I pretend a repentance only that I may escape the fires of punishment, and go on sinning under the promise of forgiveness, Christ will see long before I do that I am a hypocrite.

"Who shall have forgiveness?" He that repents. "How am I to know I have repented?" You need not know. What you and I wish is that Christ shall know. We need God's knowledge of our own hearts.

When the woman was flippant the Lord flung full and clear before her, her heart and life of sin. When the woman was penitent, Christ told her that God as Father was seeking her as worshipper.

Let us remember one thing — if we would ever hide our sins, they must be lost in the memory of God, there alone.

JANUARY EIGHTH

What is faith? I have never been told, but whether it be between husband and wife, or

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child and parent, or dealer and merchant, or man and his Maker, or Christian and his Lord, I know only one thing, faith is the gift of God.

Faith grows as his own great spirit grows, faith in himself, faith in his brethren, faith in his calling, faith which helps him through many a night of watching and day of waiting, faith in the great unseen growing out full and strong in what he has gathered of knowledge, faith greater than failure, stronger than racking disappointment.

Faith is God-given, and stretches a very blessing from the cradle on earth to the throne of God on high.

We forget the triumphs of humble faith in humble lives.

JANUARY NINTH

It is an invaluable friend who can find and know and tell us what good God has put in our hearts.

. . . that blessing of God to man, the help of a true God-serving, man-loving "person."

Do you ever pray for God's help because you wish to give God's message? When a great human being without miracle or miraculous

JANUARY

claim can carry the voice of God on to a human heart, who sent it?

JANUARY TENTH

Many a life has been absolutely given to God that never got the chance to get outside of the home walls; some patient toiler laden down with daily duty, even the sleep at night broken with some call of duty to others.

There are in history many heroes conspicuous enough: but the real heroes of the Church of God are found in humble homes where men and women and children meet and discharge daily duties, adjust daily difficulties, do the humdrum work, lead the humdrum lives of diligent, conscientious people.

JANUARY ELEVENTH

I am very tired of hearing men and women talk and say, "You know, I have my own opinion and my own thought about God." In the first place, with all respect, such people have nothing of the kind. It is something that they have heard or read, and chimes in with their own desires, their own prejudice, unhappily,

AA
founders
knew this
but wanted
the door to
be open for
everyone
who might
come to
believe in
the one true
God

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too often with their own passions. But there is something so much worse about it. They often use those words with a sort of patronizing hint of how much more they know than the Lord Jesus Christ knew, about God. If you and I could simply sit down and accept the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth of what God is, if we would not forget His love when we read of His righteousness; if we would quit wishing Him weak where for right rule it is essential that He be strong; if we could only believe that what is impossible to me may be possible to the Almighty, and what may be difficult to men may be easy to the All-wise: if in the presence of all difficulties in the ordering of God's Providence we could only hear and believe the Witness who says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that men should not perish": if we could only accept the witness of the Lord as to what God is, and as to the meaning of His own awful life on earth, with God's love for a background instead of our own guesses — then perhaps we might begin to realize the force of the whole sentence "alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

JANUARY

JANUARY TWELFTH

Are we then to approve all forms of worship,
or are we to reject all? It is a question to be
answered with the utmost caution. Christ him-
self worshipped through the forms of Herod's
Temple; but His ideal worshipper was the man
who, standing by himself, smote upon his breast,
and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner,"
and His ideal prayer you teach your children in
the nursery.

When we get to heaven no doubt we can do
without what are now the externals of our holy
religion, but we are not in heaven yet.

JANUARY THIRTEENTH

"Ought I to do this, or ought I do that?"
The answer to which is not a list of rules, it is
simply an ideal, an impulse that is all, and an
infinite "all."

Not so much God's command, as God's
impulse. *in our hearts and minds, his Spirit*
JANUARY FOURTEENTH *guiding us.*

The blessing of God to men is that in most
men you can't hush conscience. It lives in all
lands, in all places, and through all ages, the
voice of God in a human soul.

What deep heart-searching it brings to *guard* this quickened conscience from abuse — to make us dread lest we allow the clangor of sounds of this world to harm the sensitiveness of the ear; nay, beyond even that, lest we taint and harm that something within us to which we cannot give a name, but by which the child knows the first sound of a mother's voice, the life within which recognizes and knows and welcomes the Lord of all moral power, the rightful Ruler of one's own heart, and the rightful Judge of men, and the enthroned King of Heaven. What matter to the soul that welcomes the Christ the speculations of presumption or the infidelities of persistent wrong? What difference to such a conscience the wanderings of the pride of this intellect, or the chill cold hopelessness of that? The one who welcomes the Christ as Shepherd and King, who owns Him the Teacher of the Ages, rightful Ruler in the realm covered by the word "love," needs and makes no apologies for it; but faces alike the temptations of evil and of trial; he "goes in and goes out" in absolute safety under the ever-present Guide, and still more, he finds pasture as he goes.

JANUARY

JANUARY FIFTEENTH

Make the Creator of this world as great as human imagination can picture; keep His strength commensurate with the ever growing measureless miles of space and myriads of worlds; but remember, His own prophet made Him as gentle as the touch which does not break the reed, and let nobody dare to hint that He will ever quench the smoking flax.

JANUARY SIXTEENTH

I was in error, and God is true: I was negligent—and God is patient: I was defiant, and God is merciful. My sins helped the burden of this world which fell on the Christ who loved me and gave Himself for me.

The saints of God have found Him true: true in the moments of exacting toil, true in the moments of private prayer, true in the moment of public worship, true in disappointment, true in gain, true in suffering, true in health, true when nearest Christ.

JANUARY

JANUARY SEVENTEENTH

He loves your children, and makes you chasten them. He loves you and He makes your children chasten you; and what wonderful disciplinarians they are to be sure; how admirably well they keep it up, and when they can't do any better they all get sick together. Or else the Lord provides somebody near to you. He keeps about you a number of reasonable people, and He lets in some *unreasonable* ones, and they bring us to the strictest of rules, and exact all kinds of things of us. And then God knows about the other part of the "chastening": how often and how bravely you work when the body is ill and the spirit is weary. He knows when we whine as little children over nothing, but He knows, too, when the trial is real, and sees to it that "we are not tempted above that we are able." Have I made clear what this chastening is? The life drill with all its forces, the expelling the bad, bringing in and using the good, the great School House, one Head Master, many assistants, some little bits of children doing the work others could not do, their very helplessness calling out the best love of man or

JANUARY

woman; and the whole that wonderful thing
“the chastening of the Lord.”

JANUARY EIGHTEENTH

Many a time good men and women have neglected work which they ought to have done, because they have not recognized such a call from God as would bring the promise of His help to do the work in hand.

I have known good men to fail work which the Providence of God laid in their hands as plainly as if an angel had laid it there: but they were so afraid of being conspicuous, so afraid of becoming the object of ridicule, that they hid themselves, like Saul, and let God's work go undone. The Tempter makes us believe it is modesty: the whole of it is self-consciousness.

The real Jonah was one who knew and feared to warn and preach God's love, and live it. They sink God's ship who fail God's privilege, though trusted with His truth.

JANUARY NINETEENTH

“We cannot be bothered with all that is going on about us: so many are imposters and unde-

serving: there are homes for the dependent poor, and professional workers among them. Why should we trouble about this hopeless problem? Life was put here for us to enjoy. I got my money honestly: I pay my debts honestly; I spend only what belongs to myself. Really, I am too refined to be bothered with the thousands, who are around about us, in their struggle for life. Good painting is my delight. I encourage art wherever I can — pictures, sculpture, music — but you must not expect me to take an interest in the Lazarus who may be at my gate. I pay others to do that." Now let us stop right there and look. Pay other people, hand the money to this and the money to that, let people learn how to "weep with those who weep," and have their hearts throb in sympathy with a human need; to learn what is meant by human want; to give to another man money, that he may take it and learn that mystery of all Art, how to put out a hand whose mysterious cunning shall take hold on, and help to lift and to carry a heart-weight of sorrow! To have someone else take the money I give him, and learn therewith how to approach the mystery of life on its side of suffering, and wake

JANUARY

within him that something which we are told makes us to differ from all that is around and about us, differ from all animals, birds of the air or beasts of the field, yes, and makes us to differ from other men and other women, and teaches us that mysterious lesson which else we can never learn, the love of our fellow-man! Not that he is a companion of a table, nor the sharer of our taste, nor the co-laborer in some enterprise; nay, nor even kindred in tie, or close in blood, but the love of a human being simply and only *because he is a man!* The loss of this lesson makes us simply not human, and therefore ungodly.

JANUARY TWENTIETH

Men seem to think the Church has somehow gathered up stories about Christ, and thrown a veil of reverent mystery over all. Far from it — yours, my friend, is the haze. Those people were clear — one thing they knew, they *saw* the Lord.

Our obscurities of God are the mists of our own doubts, or the chill of our own unbelief, or else they are the scorching heat of our own indulged lusts and hates. And our own imper-

JANUARY

fect growth is when we bury our roots in our own speculations as to what *may* be the truth, instead of in the life of love of Jesus of Nazareth.

Let us be honest. Don't you yourselves find that belief is less distinct and clear the less we prize our prayers, and worship all the less congenial as we grow dull in faith and cold in doubt?

JANUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Doubt and unbelief may creep into our Christian atmosphere, bringing a chill like the cold vapor of the frozen marshes of earth's lower lands. They may weaken the notes of the songs of praise, they may hinder the sweep of the poems of hope, and chill the coloring which the Lord Himself has left on the pages of His promise. But the one who needs His call, who comes to Him in honest heart-worship, who takes from Him the teaching of the one God, and the law of holiness for thought and impulse as well as word and act, who repents of sin without losing hope of life, and longs for the power of the Resurrection in his own soul, will live as Moses lived, and die as Moses died, face to face with God.

JANUARY

JANUARY TWENTY-SECOND

"This is my own 'affair; it is my own conviction, and I may do with it as seems good to me." Yes; that is true *if* it is your own. But what we are insisting upon is that it is not your own, it is God's. You have not the right to do as you will with God's truth.

Preserve truth as a holy thing, not your own but God's own, lent to us to live by and live in.

Every great thinker in the world's history, if he has truth at all, has God's truth.

JANUARY TWENTY-THIRD

Wherever in this life of love and service you and I find the self rebuked, denied and conquered, there is the Kingdom of God.

Self denied in the service of right and the love of God — that is Calvary.

You have done no harm, but what good have you done? To live, to love, to serve, this is the realm Christ went to receive.

The world is self-served, and the Christ is self-crucified.

JANUARY

JANUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

God can wait: He has an endless time, but you and I cannot.

Once our Lord whispered to a man, "That thou doest do quickly." He did it, and went out into the night, and it was dark, and the light never came. He made his decision, but it was too late.

JANUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

St. Paul was a very learned student, he was even an inspired man, but the great ultimate thing to which he appealed, the one on which he depended to silence objectors, was the evidence *that he was in earnest*.

St. Paul did not brag that he had overcome somebody; he bragged that Christ had overcome him.

There are some great lives to which God in His goodness gives one great purpose, and gives the strength and courage to adhere to it until it is won and done.

JANUARY

JANUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

We don't want a dream, we don't want a poem, however beautiful it may be, we want to know, What saith the Lord!

Every time we quote the opinion of another we betray our own craving for the support of something outside ourselves. In our day with all its boasted independence there is nothing in the world this minute so craved as some final authority on which to lean for religious truth. And only one all-sufficient, absolute and infallible answer has ever been given, and that is found by the loyal heart which is content to find it in Jesus Christ our Lord.

JANUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

"Is it not better to be honest in secret than insincere in worship which is only outward, and have your life rebuked by that worship?" Certainly it is. May I ask, is it not better to be honest than a liar? Is it not better to be open with vice than secret with guilt? Is it not better for some man to attack a community with a shot-gun than with poison in the water-supply? But is it necessary to have a man

JANUARY

attack a community with either, and do you hesitate to hang both if you can find them? Why men should debate degrees of wrong when debating obligations of duty, I have never been able to find out.

JANUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

He says the Kingdom of God is within us. Not may be, not can be, not will possibly be one of these days, but it is there — there by His hand. He sketched it, He laid His own life and love at its roots, He planted it from the fruit of the garden of God, the fruit of the tree of all trees. That fruit seed is Love, and the tree itself Life — His own to give, His own to guard, His own to keep.

To my shame I may doubt in the very moment when the Spirit of faith is hovering over me to strengthen me, and I may tremble in an hour when Christ's hand is holding me, but this is my human frailty. The Christ once within is by decree of Heaven my "hope of glory."

JANUARY

JANUARY TWENTY-NINTH

To be of any use a warning or judgment must be delivered by one in whose lips and life the words may justly have a place.

No one dares assume Jonah's rôle unless God send him, and God sends men only in LOVE.

JANUARY THIRTIETH

The question is not what can prayer do in our speculation, nor how near you and I may be able to come to the exact place and office of human prayer in the divine economy of nature and grace; the question for you and me to consider is, how, in the economy of God, the richer growth of God's awful truth in our life and character can ever possibly come *without* the shelter and help of earnest Christian prayer.

JANUARY THIRTY-FIRST

The Bible is almost the Ark of your church, and it is God's own blessing in every home where it is revered, and flings its shadow of mercy even in the homes which neglect it.

Our Bible, in its Old Testament and New,

describes men exactly as they were, from the murder of Cain and the drunkenness of Noah, to the betrayal of Judas and the denial of Peter. If anyone can read the whole Bible and believe that its God approves evil in anybody, then it is useless to debate. The best we know of God we have gotten from this Book; the best and worst we know of men we get from this Book. To stop the worst and make the best is the object of the revelation, and record thereof, in the books of the Bible.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY FIRST

When He who made the New Testament wanted to find a text which would group at one view, for ages and ages, the best that even divine wisdom could give to guard and guide the relations of men to one another, He found His text in this Old Testament book, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" — the gift of the God of the Old Testament. However, you and I may or may not find the God of love in the Old Testament, the Lord Christ finds there the God of the rule of love, manward and Godward both.

FEBRUARY SECOND

God's altar may be of marble in some fair house of worship, and may be the coal box of a shivering woman, or the hand of a hungry child.

FEBRUARY THIRD

Do you ever gain the secret place of any friend, except you *live* with him? Do you ever come to know his very secret life unless you and he dwell together? You may be far apart,

FEBRUARY

but the written message, the sometimes interrupted and then resumed letters, the highly prized interviews, and the still more precious interchange of thought and taste and purpose, — what we rightly call the secret places of one's heart-life, — you get this only as you *dwell* with one another. It enriches life, if it adds intensity to the bitterness of death. It enriches friendship, if it embitters cruel distrust and break: and only as we dwell together do the secret heart-hopes, dreams and wishes come to be the common property of one another, Oh! how true this all is in our heart-life with God!

FEBRUARY FOURTH

I have never been much impressed with the logic of some well-to-do people who gave a skimp part of Sunday to church, and the rest to self; but I have been silenced at times by the simple arguments of working people, and had nothing to say in reply.

FEBRUARY FIFTH

I am afraid we speak of faith sometimes as though it were of our own making; or, even

FEBRUARY

though we believe it to be a gift of God, yet we think of it, and speak of it, as though it were some sort of *thing*, some costly work, as of metal and jewel, a thing of art and beauty, which we may bring to the Temple of God and lay before Him, which He will take as an offset for sin, a work of merit, a something or other which will make even our unevenness with our God, and offset our injuries to our fellow-men, when we have to own we have been guilty of them.

Everybody knows that faith is as indispensable among men in ordinary life as it is in the religion of God and Christ. But you cannot handle it, you cannot see or measure it. Men have tried to analyze it, but it is an ultimate particle, an original substance. The apostle names it best when he calls it the gift of God. It is indispensable; and most perfect where people cease to talk about it, and simply take it for granted. The sweetest homes, the dearest friendships, are those where the actors never dream of debating their faith in one another.

FEBRUARY SIXTH

A strong temper absolutely under control is what most of us mean by a good temper.

FEBRUARY

The man who can be angry and sin not is apt to be the man whose whole life speaks the truth of God, and he is always one who carries the message of Christ to all about him.

FEBRUARY SEVENTH

The truth is, there is something about a human being that has never been put in words; you may read about it in a book, but if you are going to get it from a character in a novel, it is the reader's imagination which will put it there in part. The great actor can find in the drama what the dramatist wanted to say, and could not, and he will supply it. This makes the difference in your speakers. One man says a better thing than another, but the less valuable speech is more valuable on account of the man who said it. For want of a better expression, we have all agreed to call this "personal power."

FEBRUARY EIGHTH

We believe in the Holy Catholic Church — Catholic, not because of this form of worship and rule, or that; Catholic, not because it includes the whole world, it never has; but

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Catholic because it does hold the whole truth of Christ. And Holy, not because its members are faultless, they never have been, they never will be; but because the Spirit of all right rule holds its members in willing obedience to the great Head of the Church; holds them within a realm which reaches from earth to heaven; holds them within a life which never ends, and in the light of the love of God.

FEBRUARY NINTH

Men frequently say, "The world owes me a living," and forget the easy answer, "And you owe the world a service."

Is there anything less in your life because there is something more in the treasury of God?

There is that which scatters and yet increases; and there is a withholding more than is meet, and it tends to poverty.

FEBRUARY TENTH

There are many warnings in the Scripture of our Lord against human nature, but not many complaints. But there is one great one. The

FEBRUARY

Lord healed ten lepers at once: one returned to give thanks, and the Master asks, Where are the nine? If we remembered oftener to be grateful, there would be more use of, and less debate about, prayer.

FEBRUARY ELEVENTH

Salvation is not the lifting, as if by a derrick, some poor creature from a pit of flame: nor is it to make a hiding place for fugitives from justice. Salvation is the putting the man back into the likeness of his God, cutting the man clear from his former record: to make him know that he is forgiven, and that the power of evil over him is broken. This the Christ brings to him. But the salvation is not perfected until he comes, receives his forgiveness, is reconciled to His Father, takes once more the shelter of the home, and then, greatest of all, the *life of God's child!*

Many a one has realized the truth and the fact of salvation who never knew what name to give it all, but knew only that they craved forgiveness, and asked in the very depths of their soul the privilege of the service of God.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY TWELFTH

The dwelling place of God is in the midst of people who desire nothing so much as His right.

We find most hope in that heart and life, not where there are keen debates as to definition or sentence, not where there are criticisms of neighbors, not where there is cleverness in theological argument, not where there is a petted fancy and constant dispute to defend and preserve my idea of right: but where there is an honest desire, for the Spirit of the Blessed Christ within me to give me such holy trust in God my King, that I honestly long to find, not my right or yours, but RIGHT, at every cost, as it is in the Kingdom of God: and when and where I bow before my Father and pray for the Spirit of the Christ, to make me more and more Christ-like, that I may be the child of God.

FEBRUARY THIRTEENTH

“Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden. My yoke is easy.” The call is universal; it is to all, no matter who; but the invitation is to take a burden, not to be free from one. Is it not in place to keep Christian

FEBRUARY

people warned that we are losing the thought of the yoke? An easy service, a universal promise of indiscriminate forgiving, a universal righting up of unevennesses, a taking down the hod from this man's shoulders, and the pen from this man's hand; the needle from this woman's fingers, and the child-care from the hand of another — a general annihilation of all toil, a universal good time, something new, something bright, something idle! Shall we go on? Something drunken, something worthless, something like a huge lie, impossible, and an insult to a human or divine mind. All this we want! Is this the Christ's message? Listen. "Take my yoke." It is useful; it links you with the awful power of God, and that to warn; and it links you with the infinite love of God, and that to help.

FEBRUARY FOURTEENTH

There can be no doubt to any fair reading of the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God, of the hopeless, eternal and fixed separation between a certain kind of evil (and a certain kind of life devoted thereto) as distinguished from good, and the service of God.

FEBRUARY

“Who shall be cast into hell fire, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” The words fairly hiss in their intensity; and some helpless human beings struggle with the words, some taking refuge in the foolish denial that they were ever said, and all of us at times forgetting the wise and holy words, “*Whoso* liveth and believeth in ME shall never die.”

Always try to leave such teaching in Jesus’ lips, for He alone is fit to teach it.

FEBRUARY FIFTEENTH

If there is anything true in the day in which we are living it is that consciously or unconsciously men are living dependent upon the ever-growing power of the life of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

I do not know anything more common than the fault of some good people of taking and using power from the exhaustless reservoir of Christ’s life which they never acknowledge.

FEBRUARY SIXTEENTH

Infallibility had better be left to the few who claim it: and let us each one of us give credit

FEBRUARY

to his neighbor for an honest wish to do the best he can.

FEBRUARY SEVENTEENTH

“Who on earth is sufficient for these things?” Nobody by himself, and almost anybody if God be with him, and the man believe it!

Stand in God’s name and Christ’s strength, and **HOLD YOUR PLACE!**

FEBRUARY EIGHTEENTH

The Lord didn’t ask the woman to tell Him what kind of rock it was, or its age and place in geologic records; nor did He even stop to ask how deep the well was. He asked her for water. Now our anxiety to know how old some books of the Bible are, who wrote them, and when and where, is all quite legitimate study, — all imperative study where possible. But, my dear friends, our Bible was never given us by the great loving God as a bundle of exciting conundrums. Never at any time has it not been true that somehow God helped His people to dip from this deep well the cup of grace which they needed for the hour in which they lived.

Said a young mother beside me, “Don’t

argue with me — give me some word of hope and help.” I should have insulted her grief if I had stopped to argue the authorship of John’s Gospel. I could say, “My child, you know your love for your son. Then listen. ‘God so loved the world as to give His Son’—so loved your child as to give His Own.” I never dare measure the sorrow of a parent for a child in suffering, death or distress, but that text of John is as truly water dipped from the fountain of God as ever the cool water which Christ craved from the woman of Samaria.

Stop wasting time on the endless debate of the ages and character of these books, and seek in them what God has sent us, what word, what message, He has for us, and you will find the difference between trying to dig a well, and drinking from one already dug.

She says the well is deep, and He has nothing to draw with. Yes, the well is deep — deep as the ages of God’s life among men, deep as the fathomless love of God for His children, and it is all gathered in this tired Man seated by the well: He is the “Word of God.” It is to bring Him and keep Him ever with us that these books were written, and are kept.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY NINETEENTH

There is nothing of which a tiny person is so much afraid as being caught in some inconsistency. Men bent on great ends cannot always stop to square up every edge. It is true, a fool is careless of the same. But it is ignorance in the fool; it is intensity of purpose in the greater life.

FEBRUARY TWENTIETH

We have very little idea how many people are habitual worshippers, how very many never leave their homes without prayer to God. We are not anxious to go out into the day and night without doing it, and I sometimes wonder why men and women who are so careful to pray, are so much afraid of having it known.

If it is doubt, say it; but don't think it is new, nor think it is peculiar — it is as old as the brethren of the Lord. But if it is faith in the Man, faith in the resistless embodiment of power, Jesus Christ, who has brought God to man, and man to God for eighteen centuries, then answer honestly, what is He to you?

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIRST

Almighty God holds, and always will hold, the whole matter of worship in His own hands, as His own of right, and not ours; and not a favor from us to Him, but a privilege from Him to us.

Is it still in your mind that worship means only averting the club of an angry giant?

No act of worship is ever quite God's worship unless it is the free act of a child coming to its parent.

Worship is to help, not measure people. Our ideal measures us.

Your life may be negligent and indifferent. But there will come something in it, and you will seek your God. You may complain against God, you may fault His justice more than suspect His kindness, wonder absolutely where His love is; but you will worship for all that. And you cannot do else.

The word "worship" reaches from the prayer of a child at the nurse's knee, on out to the most exacting search of a philosopher.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SECOND

What I cannot understand is that men who know that a land without homes is a land cursed, and a land without government is a wilderness waste, and with their open Bibles telling them that the Power which built the home and built the state, built also the Church of God, into which under some name or in some place He is gathering the people in every land, yet say they can do as well outside the church as in it.

“If it is all a matter between the soul and the Lord, as you say it is, it cannot be needed that I should be a Church member. Why should I trouble to join the church?” I answer, *if* your voice within is God-taught, and under it you welcome the rightful Lord, then why not do as the Lord commanded you?

FEBRUARY TWENTY-THIRD

Not so much “if” but What? or Who? can drive men to recognize what is right, and do it? That question met you when you walked out of your room this morning. It met you as you went through your house. It came to you in church. It will go with you till you are dead.

FEBRUARY

And your answer to that question, as it affects yourself and those about you, will have more to do with the life about you and the life to come after you, than all the money you can possibly make, or any skill you can have in any department of life. Heaven itself was robbed, and earth became the scene of the suffering of Divine Love for one single purpose — to make men seek and know and do what is right.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FOURTH

Just what a human being, endowed with human faculties, may pass into when he passes out of this life into another, and what he may become by following his own bent, and exercising his own privileges of choice, it is not possible for us to tell: only we must remember that we will not be somebody else on the other side of the river: it will be I myself, and what I am, on that side as well as on this.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-FIFTH

The danger which the church has always dreaded most, and reasonably so, is the dread of the doubt which has its origin in self-com-

FEBRUARY

placency, its nourishment in self-indulgence, and its full growth in immoral practise. These make up the great centre guard of the army of evil.

Despair of right grows side by side in the lives of evil doers, with the denunciation of evil.

No teacher known to earth emphasizes as Jesus does the ruin and power of evil, and the wreck of sin against our God.

God's miracle of all miracles: the conquering of evil in a human soul.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SIXTH

The Master never hesitated to teach where He could be sure of the listener. He refused where he could not be. "Neither tell I you" was one frightful rebuke, and His silence before Pilate has become historic.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-SEVENTH

One truth of all truths deep and lasting is that men worship as profoundly, I do not say any more so, when they obey the hard resistless command of duty as when they leap at the impulse of delight.

It is a life already prejudiced, and sometimes

FEBRUARY

ruined, which has the thought that because a thing is not pleasant it is therefore not duty.

Men always have and always will alternately groan under burdens, and plead to be permitted to carry them.

I have some acquaintances who are too enterprising to be free to labor. And the man most Christian is the man freest to follow legitimate labor. I am not sure that the man or woman who from Christian principle, from gratitude to God, is content to *toil* is not living on the highest of Christian planes.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-EIGHTH

By the grace of God, the highest of all moral acts is to put our trust under the shadow of the Almighty throne.

FEBRUARY TWENTY-NINTH

It may be freely confessed that there is hardly a sentence in the seventeenth chapter of St. John which does not present any amount of difficulties if people want to look for them, and any amount of comfort if one is honestly willing to receive it.

We keep our minds fixed on difficulties. Who ever got anywhere doing that?

MARCH

MARCH FIRST

One would think that the world was old enough, and experience was wide and deep enough to stop all of us from overrating the power of grief. Take the mismanagement of money — someone is entrusted with other people's means. Time goes on; at first the trustee is careless, then he is false, then he is overwhelmed with grief. People have a great deal of pity for him: but not every one stops to think that the widow and children who were to live on the money will have nothing to live on, and that the tears of the offender would not sell for ten cents a gallon in the market. Of all selfish things in this life an offender's sorrow may be the most selfish. Am I sorry for myself? That means death. Am I sorry for God and my fellow man? That means desire and effort, both, to set things right.

MARCH SECOND

Is it possible that each one of us will toil and struggle to do some one thing in our tiny lives, only to find at the end that our mere work has

MARCH

gone for nothing, and that some strong ruling characteristic has done its own recording, and each will admit to himself that that is the real man?

MARCH THIRD

Of only one person on this earth does the Bible say he stands in God's place, and that person is a father.

. . . that absolutely most potent force in all of life, that priestess in God's own place, the Christian mother.

The shortest line known on this earth from God's will to a child's life is through a father's or a mother's heart, and no other route ever will or can be as short or as sure.

MARCH FOURTH

The distinction of right and wrong must be made, is the absolute condition of life, but its appeal must be sustained at one and the same time by an appeal to fear, and then to something infinitely higher than fear.

One thing we must take with us for time and for eternity, with the life here and the life there, that there is no meaningless silly mingling

MARCH

of right and wrong; there is the most absolute, distinct statement, "judgment is committed unto the Son." Those who love us warn us; if God loves us why should He not say it?

After one awful prayer in Gethsemane He let them lead Him through the mockery of a trial and the misery of Calvary where He might be the Saviour, because He is the Judge, of the world. That suffering, death and mighty resurrection are the measure which Christ made of the difference between right and wrong.

MARCH FIFTH

What these men learned was not that Christ ministered to their vanity, but that He took fast hold of them by one great thing. It was that if they believed in Him, so He believed in them; and if they could trust Him as their Teacher, He could trust them with His truth.

MARCH SIXTH

St. Paul nowhere uses an illustration for life itself. Its processes may be illustrated, its influence may be felt, its power be shown, its expression be seen in the fruit of a tree or the

MARCH

life of a man. But the thing itself is a fact, or nothing.

MARCH SEVENTH

The cross day by day may become heavy and galling: and then it is flung down, and the unfinished life is broken and left.

You say "your sceptre is broken." Yes, and a good thing that it is. It was only a sceptre of reed, easily broken. Now win one worth having, "Who endures to the end, to him I will give a crown of life, and to sit on My throne." None but Christ gives that sceptre. It is a gift from heaven, and that sceptre will NOT break.

MARCH EIGHTH

It does not make Moses any the less sincere, but to most of us it will make him more intensely human if we know that his awful full realization of how near Almighty God is always to His people first came to this man under the consciousness of his own guilt.

MARCH NINTH

The more absolutely sure some men become in their own self-knowledge that they mean

MARCH

right and wish right, that they have a great general respect for God and religion, certainly the more sure they are that their lives are consistently obedient to the truth, then a good many of such men are most confident that they can neglect without harm the public worship of God.

MARCH TENTH

I don't know that the Lord was consulted as to when He would like to hang on the Cross for your redemption, but if His crucifixion is really on your heart, and you allow the goodness of God to bring it out so that your faith may be a witness to somebody else, then your hours will be made to suit your work.

MARCH ELEVENTH

Of the family too much has never been said.

A kind home and diligent parents may at any moment be well turned by the power of the Spirit of God into an argument for the truth of Jesus Christ, as the Revealer of the infinite God, as the Father of us all; and of Heaven, as the ideal home.

MARCH

MARCH TWELFTH

Three-fourths of the learning about the Bible to-day is round about it. They can't tell you what is in it.

Our collect and prayer does not ask God to help us read *about* the Bible. We ask to be helped to read *IT*.

MARCH THIRTEENTH

There is an immense difference between the dreamy romance which fills idle hours with dreams of all sorts of possible and impossible successes, and the quiet *thought* which is only too thankful for a leisure quiet hour in which to arrange its more careful work.

We forget that the good Christ cautioned us that our *thoughts* make the very realm into which He peers. And how few do think! We muse, we build our castles of pride and desire, and then we wonder that no heaven-sent lessons drop in on our leisure moments.

MARCH FOURTEENTH

Beautiful is His morality: but that would only make Him a great man. And some who

MARCH

adhere to His morality *keep* Him only a great man. It is not by reason of His miracles: other men have been wonder-workers. Only one thing makes the hosts of His church on earth worship Him. It is His power on earth to forgive. Where that comes, men own Him God.

He is all that a sinning man longing to be better can have: a penitent man longing to change: an earnest man longing to be true: a man often defeated in struggle against sin anxious to triumph: He is all and more than we can desire.

MARCH FIFTEENTH

A morality which can be counted and measured, a morality to be brought down to a line of human choice, — that must forever be a morality on the earth side, and so, short of the level of the Kingdom of God. He who has only that, who can tell you to a nicety how often he is moral, and stops there, he is according to Jesus Christ, not “in His Kingdom of Heaven.”

Christ gave no rule of morality, His whole purpose was, not to lead men to trace a line or count a number, but to train human character,

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to make men Godly in wish, desire, aim, purpose, effort and hope.

The morality of Jesus is not a thing, it is a thought; it is not a weight, it is an inspiration: not a line, however many miles up and away, it is a hope, it is the power of God's love and life and Spirit.

MARCH SIXTEENTH

How often we try to put our debt to God into figures, and to name some limit beyond which we need not go!

Whenever you can express a thing in figures that is the whole of it! The figures may be big, and they may be little. They may be millions, but you have got the end. But you can't express love in figures, and you can't put God in figures; and These are Christian figures!

"Be ye therefore perfect." Instantly all rules by figures are done for, avowedly, an infinite standard is raised, and for that we are bidden to strive.

We are not beaten. We would be if numbers measured us, but they do not.

Which is most use to us in our life effort — the Ten Commandments or the Christ? The one

MARCH

is God's *rule* wise and just and good. The Other is the presence and power of God's love, a living Lord.

MARCH SEVENTEENTH

The best rule for keeping Lent that I know is to try to let Christ keep you. Let the Crucified One be your aid, let Him give grace, let His service claim you, let His Spirit rule your worship, till selfishness will give place to freer giving than ever before, till indulgence for His sake is rebuked: and then all this Lent will be what I know in my own heart, and so know you in yours, God has given it for, a time to store up strength for a truer fight with sin, for better service to God and men, a Lent which we have kept because it has been our aim and prayer, reached and granted, that Christ has kept us.

We fight, but ours are heavy odds,
For we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

MARCH EIGHTEENTH

Long ago I gave up trying to read the intricacies of Providence. Some people do seem to have far more trial and trouble than others.

MARCH

But many of these Job-like men and women are the most devout, earnest and humble believers and servants of Christ. Since the days of David some of the most wicked have been the most prosperous in the world's eyes. Since the days of Job some of the most loyal have been the most tried. But from the time of Job through to the explicit words of Christ there is one thing forbidden to men, and that is to *turn judge* of oneself or others, and to try to connect the Almighty's hand in some sad sorrow of a human life with any particular offence in this or that man's conduct.

MARCH NINETEENTH

A wonder greater than floating iron has been wrought, and you and I will lift and carry nothing without it. We will not lift ourselves above the waters of despair, we will not lift ourselves above the waters of condemnation, we will never be lifted above the floods of evil and their power to gain forgiveness, unless the wood that floats us, as a life preserved absolutely secure, is that Cross on which was offered the Sacrifice for the sin of the world.

MARCH

MARCH TWENTIETH

"Nothing succeeds like success." But I am disposed to go with those who answer, "No. Failure sometimes succeeds as well as success," though one hardly need expect the easy-going million to accept that as true. Some people have thought that, until success becomes something close to a curse, and then the best thing in the world may be a failure. Let us stop our whole-hearted worship of success.

Why, is there on this earth any inspiration and hope held out from other lives like that which comes from the darkest gloom of what men called failure? John Baptist, pronounced the greatest born of woman, died in prison, the easy plaything of bloody men and a worse woman. And out from the gloom of all glooms comes the cry, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

Keep Lent a little more, and ask the One who is most interested to guide it all, and the best will come yet.

MARCH

MARCH TWENTY-FIRST

Possibly, after all, Christianity has not failed yet; and whoever may attempt to follow it, and whatever origin they may claim for it, here is the simple fact: a Galilean Peasant nearly nineteen centuries ago quoted from the old Books of His people, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself!" And He put the quotation in the forefront of His life and work, and while these laws had slept for a thousand years before, from His day till now these laws as a distinct command have been pushed by some Power through the history of mankind, until to-day in the forefront of civilization, in its very centres, and as its highest aim, the best men and women are claiming this law as the most absolute protection, hope and help of mankind. Men and women who decline the church, who acknowledge Jesus as only man, are seeking to be under His law, and without knowing it *are* under His life. One moment these men say such a law as a command is impossible, and the next moment hold it out as the world's shelter and hope.

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MARCH TWENTY-SECOND

Blessed is the truth of the power of this promised Spirit to come in the days of difficulty, distress and sorrow, to confirm faith, to quicken dying hope, to strengthen more and more the failing resolve when sin and death seem to be winning, and God seems not to hear. But it is not for earthquake hours alone of human experience that the Spirit is promised. He is to abide with us, He is the Spirit of counsel and strength when the great heart-wrenches come, but He is there to help as well when we are under the lassitude come of every-day humdrum life, when duties are not great but little and only constant, when difficulties are not majestic with importance, but exhausting with their insistency. It is the morning by morning, day by day exhaustion, it is the mighty littlenesses of the little lives, like yours and mine, through which the promise is to be fulfilled. It has always been so and always will be; it is through the daily, hourly, tiny living of tiny lives like ours that the world is made better; evil is beaten down and good is strengthened; that Christian civilization has come to have its mighty meaning,

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and that the church of God stands to-day rather for the earnest effort of her many people than for the gift of eloquence of Paul or Chrysostom, of Francis or Luther, of Wesley or Moody.

MARCH TWENTY-THIRD

The most dreadful skepticism, the part that does the hurt, is not always the carefully drawn argument of a learned skeptic, it is the easy, laughing skepticism which doubts the plain every-day truth that the humblest honest Christian draws his life from God.

MARCH TWENTY-FOURTH

We stop doing good works, not because we are shut up in prison, but because we are shut up in self.

Go on the mount to learn your lesson. Go down to the foot of it to serve suffering men.

MARCH TWENTY-FIFTH

Christ will do better by us. He will give us power, ~~power~~ power to know and power to do: to know, not how God made the world, or how man came or did not come, not even how He will

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straighten out all the unevenness in life: but knowledge of God, that He hates the evil and loves the good, that He dreads the harm of sin in human life and human hearts, and reaches down from His very throne to help men in the struggle. He does not stop to give us answers to the conundrums of life, but gives clear knowledge of the duties thereof, and promises power to meet them.

MARCH TWENTY-SIXTH

It is the experience of most of us that the nearer we get to what seems plainly stated truth in the life of Our Lord, the nearer we come to truth which on one side may be the helpful example for a little child, and on the other may exhaust the ability of the profoundest philosopher. The Lord's birth, the Lord's temptation, His suffering and death, all help or weary us, accordingly as we take them for helps in ordinary life, or attempt to make them the subjects of philosophic essays. Every little child in twenty-four hours puts to the test the most profound theories of philosophers, but he does not write or read an essay thereon; and the ordinary incidents in the life of Our Lord may

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be the comfort of those of us who are simple-hearted, or the tax and possible confusion of those who would be learned and wise.

MARCH TWENTY-SEVENTH

There is one last force, which rules the whole, the mighty, hidden but tremendous force of Christ with His own. The disciples simply followed in loyal humblest love: their thronged Leader would take the humblest beast, and that a recognized emblem of peace and peaceful effort, He moving and they following. And if evil oppose, still on and on they go; evil will still struggle till it crucifies and kills, yet ever forward they go, Oh! nothing hindering! for God leads, while the humble writer tells in language priceless in simple truth, "We did it all, but we never knew what we did!" Long after, when Calvary was past, and Easter had come, and Olivet had been ablaze in the light of the Ascension, they all remembered an old prophecy, and then thought how strange they had done it all! I know not how it seems to you, ~~my~~ friends, but to me this is one of God's gold-pockets, as the miners call them, in His word, telling us how these men in all their simple love

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and kindly interest, and true loyalty and humility were swept on to do for the dear Lord by holy impulse and holy guidance, pushed by a force whose power they never dreamed of, carried forward by an enthusiasm which no one stopped to measure, and lo! afterwards they found they had wrought a great epoch-making incident in God's march for truth and right and life and love! You, my brother, in whose breast God works the glory of Palm Sunday, go on doing, when you know not, some great honor, simply because you have obeyed Christ's impulse to a holy, humble and unquestioning loyalty and love.

MARCH TWENTY-EIGHTH

What a blessed fast Lent would be to many of us if we could only remember where and when we could make most for peace, and least for pain, be least unkind and most Christian, stop pointing the finger, stop the talk that hurts and harms, say with the Prophet, "shut one's mouth." If we follow the Prophet's Lent we will not have been witty at the expense of others, we will not have used our power unfairly, we will not have done anything very great, except we will have saved a friend, we will have broken

MARCH

a bad habit, we will have found the Lord's thought of charity.

MARCH TWENTY-NINTH

I must say I envy the temperament always even, and the faith always buoyant, but I must pity the mind and conscience which finds no warrant in God's use of forty days, in which men shall come to know right from wrong: and whose hearts sink not into silent awe as they realize Jehovah's eternal scale for the drilling of their own souls in truth and purity and love.

MARCH THIRTIETH

The great Teacher of the Temple of old lay prone in the shadows of a land, so Holy even then. The pascal moon poured her light around while the ancient trees of the garden flung back her beauty, and held the space in shadow, and there, bowed ah! how low, pleads the MAN. He is not now answering cavillers, He is not now training His own—it is a low, solemn moan which moves with its mystery through the aisles of this great House of Prayer.

MARCH

MARCH THIRTY-FIRST

It is easy to get tired in body, and with that, tired in spirit. Is it always Watch and Pray? Yes, — always. The flesh is strong to endure and has won the triumphs of the ages: and it is weak and it has lost them. Men are earnest, and men are diligent, but men give out. Watch and pray that ye be not overtaxed.

APRIL

APRIL FIRST

No Christian man or woman has any superstitious feeling about a Christian death. There is nothing of a horror to be hurried away, nothing to make us want to forget it. The memory of the one gone is hallowed, pure and blessed, for the spirit lives on, and is a part of the great company of God, built into the life of Christ. A deep heart-ache if you will, but hope shining through, growing stronger as the days go on, more real as the thought builds itself into a reality of a spirit redeemed and blessed in the presence of God.

APRIL SECOND

He kept giving until in the end He gave Himself, mind, heart, time, effort, strength, soul and body. The one privilege He asked was the giving of self for the gathering of God's people.

We should have the Crucifixion of Christ within our own homes, not as a thing to be dreaded, but somehow a standard, and then an impulse, a desire and a life, an effort sustained

APRIL

through discouragement, a something impossible of defeat.

The most Pilate and Caiaphas could do was to kill the body of Jesus. Then the infinite love of God came rushing over the earth, that power at last greater than all, and that in which and with which men face and overcome evil.

The Christ moved out over lines of life where without death there could be no life after.

Surely if ever a shadow fell on men in hope of great work it was when the sun went down on the disciples of Jesus Christ on the first Good Friday. Death was over all. "We thought," some whispered, "that it was He who would restore Israel" . . . only thought, now only doubt. The throes of nature seemed well in place in mourning for a lost power. Deep, deep shadow over all — whence could come the power which could arrest and roll it off and away?

APRIL THIRD

Of all the glad worship of this Day, not one song of praise will be too ecstatic, not a word can be said too extravagant for the truth it would carry, no sign of gladness in the decora-

APRIL

tion with God's own colors of natural growth can be out of place. And yet the Day is always chiefest in place among those whose sombre robes tell their own sad story, and in whose lives and hearts, whatever the outward decoration, or want of it, memories pure and sweet of those who have gone before hold absolute sway.

God forbid that we should go through our forty days only to find human fault and our own weakness: and not be led to this great Day with its one enormous blessing of the glorious light of Christian hope—the resurrection of gladness, because the Resurrection of God.

APRIL FOURTH

It is something infinitely beyond a matter of curiosity for the Christian to know that the Resurrection-body of the Lord meant a state of unhindered approach to the presence of the Almighty Father.

The man who knows the power of Christ's Resurrection is heaven-taught where John the Baptist and Moses are ignorant.

APRIL

APRIL FIFTH

Not only battle for the right is ours, but when the Great City is taken it is to be the City of Peace, and its songs are to be songs of Joy. But if you and I sit down and wait, then joy will never come. If we go to seek for it, we shall never find it. We may have wealth, but the combined fortunes which this American life delights to recount will never buy it. It is always before you, but you will never reach it by approaching, and yet you have a right to its presence, to journey with you as you go, to sit by your side as you rest, to weave its way through your dreams as you sleep, and to wake you with its own hymn of praise, never louder than on Easter morning. Men have known this joy who had but the scanty remains of a day's wages, and others have known it in the presence of enormous wealth. Women have had it when racked by pain, others in the exultation of Amazon life. Many a time hymns of praise have floated through the bars of prison houses, and they have come from the fires which destroyed the saints of God. But always it has been where men welcomed from the tomb the Victim of

APRIL

Calvary, and found in Him the assurance of forgiveness, and the promise of never-failing help.

APRIL SIXTH

The single expression "There is one Lawgiver" has, since the day of its writing, defied all intellects, except those too little trained and taught to know how much it means.

You and I forget God's scale, and cannot measure it when we remember it.

God's scale is measured by His love and life, and ages are not too long for Him to wait to fit and prepare whole races of men for the endless eternity.

APRIL SEVENTH

God often sends pain to warn: He must at times permit it to be wrung from Him by human whim. He often uses it, from the patience of sufferers who preach patience in a sick-room, or under cruel wrong, through the lives of martyrs old and new, rising, ever rising, in the scale of privilege and power till the strange mystery of sanctified suffering man comes nearest to God at the foot of the Cross.

The truth is, suffering is a dialect of earth

APRIL

which everybody understands. It is a universal sign language.

There is an office for suffering, evidently, in the greatest of lives which completes where other things had failed.

APRIL EIGHTH

The great Teacher always makes distinct His own purpose, but He satisfies no curiosity.

We can own Christ's teaching is too much for us, and be all the more devout if we still hold fast to Him.

APRIL NINTH

The missing link, the missing agent of transfer in some life this minute is precisely your own heart, into which Christ in mercy came to dwell: and you forgot that the only possible way to keep Him there was to help Him pass to somebody else.

APRIL TENTH

There is no more Christian instinct than to give. The people who are so constituted that they cannot give gladly, and from a pure motive, and with a pure aim, are the most pitiable people on all this earth.

APRIL

He meant not only to help the receiver, but to educate the giver. No man or woman ever reaches what Christ meant until they feel the reaction upon themselves of what they have, in Christ's Name, done for another.

APRIL ELEVENTH

I have the fullest sympathy with patient students of God's word when difficulties arise, because we fall into two very easy difficulties without knowing it. First, we do not distinguish between the men who did these things recorded in the Bible, and the men who were inspired to write them down. The inspiration which told David's story in all its horror had nothing to do with its doing. The whole Bible tells more of the faults of good men than of bad ones, because it tells the story as it stands, and the story is of men like ourselves, who struggled against sin instead of falling under it: while the hordes who made no fight God's record has no place for. And secondly, we forget that these poor men fought in the dark, while we live in Jesus' light, and we try them by our privileges. The teaching and the help which Christ gives to-day, and always is giving, would have been a

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perfect glory of gladness to many of those poor benighted souls, David among them. But inspiration warns us by hanging a light right over the failure. All the way along you have these lights hung over where God's own people got out of *His path*.

APRIL TWELFTH

Forgiveness is a double act, requiring one to offer and another to receive it. It is not perfect until it is received. God can't forgive you or me if we do not distinctly accept His gift, not as men sometimes carelessly go on in guilt, saying they accept, and denying it in act. They do not accept from their hearts, and God cannot forgive.

The very root idea of the Kingdom of God on earth is forgiveness. All men admit that none but God can forgive sins. Starting with that, we want to be told that God is willing to forgive. But to tell just that came Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

APRIL THIRTEENTH

Honesty is a beautiful thing to preach about, but nothing preaches it like an honest man, or a true woman.

APRIL

APRIL FOURTEENTH

How often most of us ask, "Why cannot God give us some great sign, something which shall lead us, tell us what to know, what to do, and when to do it?" Whether we and our lives are on a scale to justify an especial display of power to bring some portent in heaven or some sign on earth, I fear we do not stop to consider. But the truth is, the world's work must be done, if at all, in the name of God and His purposes, by those who need not wait for some great portent, but can fight a battle on the tiniest hint, and the leading of some ordinary event: can find in the wind in the tops of the trees the messages of God's army near at hand, can find in the ordinary events of life the sound of the moving of His hosts, the hint of when His battle must be fought, and where and how.

APRIL FIFTEENTH

It is the characteristic of the ideal man, as described in Scripture, that he may be traced within tiny lines as well as on broad ones.

APRIL

APRIL SIXTEENTH

My friend, I care not who you are, if your life is worth having, be you man or woman, adult or child, nay, whether others count your life useful or useless, what either you already crave, or for what you may well ask our God, is just the coming of some strange power which can and will give you back a step lost in the dreadful labyrinth of life; and some hand great and strange enough to push back the shadow which threatens to fall with its chill upon the next eventful steps of your life.

APRIL SEVENTEENTH

Civilization walks a stately splendid figure through the ages, and points here and there to triumphs which only the wildest ignorance would forget, or dull, stupid prejudice attempt to belittle: but she must turn her back and try to forget many a sad page in her story, where the weaker, suffering few made only material for the gain of the after-coming many. At last civilization has to measure by the mass, she has to think in mighty numbers, she has to lay down human life over and over to make her awful

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highway to some vantage ground which she can take and hold.

The Christian Church has a message for civilization and its march which we forget to deliver. Jesus Christ stands before the great advancing column! He does not say the individual must never be made to suffer, He does not say time will never come when the feeble must go under: His own awful life showed where the purest and best must be laid down in the pathway of any gain for men which should come: His own life is itself the law of sacrifice for God and good. *But* He speaks, for all this, and says, "It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish." When men *forget* even one, they have failed God's own awful will. May not the Church message in this day, as in many, be this warning lest men forget the rights, in God's unchanging will, not only of the few, but of each?

APRIL EIGHTEENTH

Not every trust is a robber's cave, nor every union *of* trade: not every man or woman hounded by social gossip is a guilty one: not every one who declines to give as you and I

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demand holds his means defiant of God — but men in power would use power wisely, men in place honor God with their life, men and women of means would hold wealth and serve God therewith, each would far beyond his dream influence well human estimate of it, each would as well have reason to thank God if, amidst the glory and power of gladness, we could have God's value of a human soul.

APRIL NINETEENTH

“Charity, charity, charity” has become almost the cry of this day in many mouths, and men who use it seem honestly to feel that they are being charitable because they exact it of others. The charge of narrowness against the Church may, but may not, prove the guilt of the Church — and it may call for inquiry if the demand does not come from those ignorant of charity themselves. I may look twice before I own that it is “charity” which is so harshly asking for charity.

APRIL TWENTIETH

You cannot give dollars for appearance sake and for food, and pennies to Christ, without

APRIL

teaching your children that you yourselves and that indulgence are more important than Christ and His truth. It is not mine to tell you where to give, or what: but it *is* mine to tell you that in your giving or withholding, you yourselves are expanding the life, the soul, the great God-made, Christ-redeemed character of your children to God's awful measure; or you belittle them to the dwarfs of this life.

APRIL TWENTY-FIRST

How many of us worship through sense? We say, "It made me feel so good": and that may be a very great blessing provided it made you honest and pure and true. What Moses was getting in the mount was a law of right, while the people were getting a worship to make them feel good. Feeling is a very blessed thing where based on honest conviction: and it is a very transitory and treacherous thing when it is simply the indulgence of a sensation. Truth can be carried into minds on the wave of God-given song, into which it never else could enter. But the waves of sound may go in, and leave the truth outside. Let us thank God that feel-

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ing is a privilege, not a gauge of faith or Christian life either.

APRIL TWENTY-SECOND

People gazed at Paul when they found he was a Christian, and they always will *gaze* at a sure enough Christian, trying to be kind and thoughtful.

APRIL TWENTY-THIRD

Ridicule, potent and dangerous in every day, finds an easy target in orthodoxy and Christian dogma and theological controversy: and all these are often legitimate marks, they are often tiny, narrow and unreasonable, shutting out from God's church men whom angels will welcome in heaven. But ridicule may ask and take, in the name of liberality, what God meant to be power in your heart and life. "One church is as good as another" is a cry with which I have no possible sympathy, and many who use it would not if they only stopped to think. Let us guard a little. Men if worth anything are apt to be narrow — you and I are so.

APRIL

APRIL TWENTY-FOURTH

While throwing into your life all the energy, all the cleverness, all the earnestness, all the quickness and aptness of which you are capable, yet let the Christ make captive of your selfishness — there where temptation comes to taint your name, and make gain of your honor, though the world would say it is just; yet conscience tells you it is not clean: there where custom sets up one standard, and your sense of honor another. And while you may never think it, men will know and say, yes, and thank God for it, that you are God's captive in the train of Christ, moving always, as it does, up toward the throne of Love and Right.

APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH

There was a strange man, upon whom the great Paul set his dreadful judgment as useless, unfit for the Church's work: but of whom he later writes, "Bring him here, he is useful," and of whom the world now is content to say simply, "The Gospel according to Saint Mark" — only an attendant to Paul, only pen-man to Peter, only an evangelist to the Christ. Could Paul

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then have imagined that his once rebuked servant might one day stand in the world's count equal to himself in the Lord's service? Never. Everybody knows now, and knew then, that this hesitating boy was far inferior to Paul in force of character. So be it, but simply serving where God put him, he stands to-day well ranked: he was "useful" to Paul, he is useful to us.

APRIL TWENTY-SIXTH

Of all things on this earth, that over which parents may watch with bated breath, and friends must watch with wise caution, nay, that over which the great Christ tells us the angels of God linger to watch and hear, is the choice which a human being makes in the solemn hour of a life decision. Toward what? toward whom? and with whom? There is nothing more solemn in this world than the deciding choice of a human life.

APRIL TWENTY-SEVENTH

"Show us His love!" Now comes the Master's answer to Philip, "Who hath seen me (seen with deep spirit-sight, seen as the mind and heart

APRIL

see) who hath seen ME hath seen the Father." That life is love, that is its power to-day, and always has been; its knowledge within its avowed range is faultless, and its sacred Hand touched the secret places of nature's force; but its power, past all debate, is LOVE.

APRIL TWENTY-EIGHTH

Not all are indifferent, let alone irreverent: and long past the point where human judgment will allow that men reverence the Almighty, doubtless the Father's eye and ear recognize both service and prayer.

In God's own estimate there may be more individuals in this world than you and I know, whose powers of a whole life rank, in the arithmetic of Jesus Christ, for more than ten thousand men armed for battle.

APRIL TWENTY-NINTH

A marvellous age it is that has found new inventions for everything except one—that is to make men recognize and DO RIGHT. You must go back nineteen hundred years to get the best means for that.

APRIL THIRTIETH

You need every help you can get. The hindrances to your Father's approach are many, but, hallowed by Christ and His Spirit, your Church, your work, your home are all mediums through which God is borne to you.

If you do not want God for anything but a speculation, then you will have Him as a speculation. If you want God for the patron saint of a debating society, for that you will have Him, and He will be nothing for you to live by or die by. But if you seek to go to God, if your act of approach is one of worship, with or without form, under stress of duty, or impulse of delight, then the Almighty God comes to you.

MAY

MAY FIRST

Pilgrims of the night we often must be, but pilgrims of darkness we need none of us ever be.

Joy is a glad word. But joy can do what hilarity can never do, it can live and grow in quiet hours.

MAY SECOND

Why do you so often wonder and stop and argue when the pulpit only repeats our Master's warning that the secret of peace and quiet and prosperity in the whole moral world is simply FAITH in our fellow-men, come of Faith in the great government of God?

MAY THIRD

Until the Lord Jesus, men had theorized about the ideal right. The Lord lived it until He could say, "I am the Way," and served it without a break until the keenest doubt struggles to the point of nonsense in its effort to find one fault in Him or His life.

MAY FOURTH

A good friend complained, "The Lord told me not to let my left hand know what my right hand was doing." I answered, "By all means. What I want you to do is to let your right hand know what it is not doing. The Lord has no objection to that."

The tiniest act of kindness which you do will be burned into memories never to be effaced on earth: and we have the promise that they will not be forgotten in heaven.

MAY FIFTH

How far has your life or mind helped to bring in the true light which will show people what is fault, and what is right? How far does each in his life or hers make at once distinct the difference between the fool and the noble, and make the life of the one repellent, and the life of right attractive, and make it possible? A human being is to be a hiding place. You, man or woman, God means you to be, not a minister of torture ruling in cruelty those in your home, or, by your gossip, those who are your neighbors: but the light from your life to be such as

MAY

to make them seek you, as a rebuke if you please, but a rebuke which shall be a shelter, a something which shall draw to you and away from wrong. God wants you to be a man or woman who, by His infinite grace, broods day and night planning for that which in God's sight shall indeed be noble, and draw to your side those weary of wrong, tired by trial, longing for purer light, and hoping for better life. The office is not easy, the office is hard. One must be strong to do it, yet it may not be strength of body, and not always strength of mind. The Prophet says nothing of these: but it must be strength which is moral, and strength which is spiritual: a life which distinctly takes hold on, and draws from that great after Ideal which the Prophet foresaw, the hope of an empire in its day of danger, and the help of the humble home in the hour of its heartache and sorrow. No foolish apologies, no idle excuses, no belittling wrong and its evil, its power of cruelty and hurt, no hiding of the difficulties of following the right, and yet distinctly somehow a "shelter" man or a "shelter" woman in the storm of an angry home, or that pitiless beating of the sleet stones of popular scandal. No one ever filled

MAY

that office without something more than a tax on patience. They are people who somehow have themselves suffered. The sacrifice of ease, the sacrifice of amusement, the sacrifice of indulgence, the putting aside of self is absolutely essential. Nobody ever successfully preached down wrong and preached up right without it.

MAY SIXTH

We speak of our pleasure: do we ever dream that God Himself may have it?

To Him the sweetest tribute is human love.

MAY SEVENTH

For anyone, the power to lift others is the only power which lifts us: as we lift others we are lifted. Those who are most truly "men-lifters" are themselves lifted with the rise of their own aid to others, to places from which men will never pull them down.

MAY EIGHTH

I know no more tremendous thought than that God Almighty can trust a human soul, and that that soul may be my own self.

MAY

MAY NINTH

If we could have wise faith in men, in good, in Christ, in love, in life and hope and God, then we would not waste our time over conundrums in the inspired records of God's dealing with men. The man who has dug up the secrets of the day when Abraham emigrated, or David reigned, or Hosea preached, may well instruct me, or turn robber to plunder me of faith: but he is *not* my shepherd to whom my heart must answer, nor ever can be.

MAY TENTH

It takes both right provision and right request to make up the well-ordered house, and to change a mere living-spot into a home.

The bond of parent and child on earth is most like the life in heaven.

The parent in whose eyes his child is not sacred is a parent whose child is not safe.

MAY ELEVENTH

There was Judas to begin with. St. Peter lied on the night of the trial: and in every age since,

MAY

the Lord's foes have been the hypocrites of His own house. But the Church has grown, and that among people to whom she has had nothing to offer but the help of Christ to be true and clean and pure and kind.

From Judas' treason to the last frail soul who has brought shame to the sacred ministry, the Spirit has been giving His highest lesson of love, not to and through angels, but to and through men—frail men and women, whose first initiation into the mighty company is the forgiveness of sins, and the last blessing is the forgiveness of sins,—Peter in his failure, Paul in his hate, popes and kings, peasants and cottagers, led by the Spirit to serve the Christ, and know the blessing of forgiveness.

MAY TWELFTH

If we are ever to bear witness for God, if we are ever to carry, not send, a life message, it must be because in and through just these tiny duties of life we show, in daily walk and conversation at home, and outside of home as we go in and out among our fellows, our secret resistless life power, given us by the grace of God. It is just in our hourly living that we must

MAY

exercise, if ever, our influence, and come into personal touch with those who know not Christ, and have not His Life: and impart by actual life-touch the power which He has given us.

MAY THIRTEENTH

Have you made Christ your Teacher? I do not mean have you somehow caught the higher Christian ideas of truth and right, of home love, and home life? all this may have come as leaven comes to dough. I do not mean do you recognize the protecting power of Christian civilization? Doubtless you do. So do birds hide in a tree: but we want more than a yeast and bird-like Christianity. Have you made Christ *yours*? If this Man is to be your Teacher, you must give up what you have, just so far as it hinders Him. "I have nothing antagonistic to Christ." Yes, you have, or He would be yours now.

I do not for a moment doubt the leaven-like influence of Christianity upon us all: I know it in my own case and in yours — the ease with which, bird-like, we chatter in its branches — but have ~~we~~ made this Man our Leader in such sense that our obligation is as a subject to his King, and a soldier to his Captain?

MAY

HE is to be the Leader, HE is treasure, field, pearl, all — yes, it is a very mixed metaphor, but it is a very clear truth.

MAY FOURTEENTH

Great indeed the doing on the part of man, but infinite the giving on the part of God!

Service amounts to little if as we serve God, God does not serve us! If Christ has ever done you a service, then, my friend, you may be sure of one thing, it cost you much when He did it! He did not take your all, but it seemed like it at the time. Down went all interest and care for anything else, but just then the Christ! this strange Teacher, did for you a *service*, which none else could do — He did it by His strange hope, perhaps, and did it by a still more strange power of human sympathy, mingled with infinite divine love. But your barter? what was that? Down and away went pride, and self-will, and you did what you never did before, you *prayed*! It was by heart answering heart: and that is prayer.

MAY

MAY FIFTEENTH

There is no sadder duty than the inevitable and dreadful decision which must sometimes be made, where one knows every just and unjust, every good and evil, prejudice in the human life is roused; and decide as one will, he knows he must leave some one for whom he has the kindest good-will on the other side of the line from himself. But there is one truth, — no man will ever have praise of God for trying to straddle the line, and be on both sides.

MAY SIXTEENTH

It makes all the difference as to whether the starting point is man reaching up to heaven, or God reaching down towards earth. If I am trying to tie Christ to me by human speculations, that is one thing; if Christ is trying to tie me to Him by His love and truths, that is an entirely different thing. Man-made religions are on their face philosophies: but a religion given by Christ — a tie, a thing flung out from heaven to reach our lives through His is a totally different thing. It does seem to me that the difference between a religion which comes from God

MAY

to seek men, and a human philosophy trying to find good, is exactly the difference between the feeble efforts of men drawing their own ropes on the deck of a fated vessel, and the life guard sending the life-line on board that men may draw after them the hawser of Divine Love.

MAY SEVENTEENTH

What is this which we call religion? Some may answer that it is faith. No. Faith is the first line that goes flinging over the wreck, but it is not the line they use in making safety. That which makes me secure is the hawser that the first line drags after it. And the tie between me and God is not my puny faith—the tie between God and me is His Son; the God I love gave His Son.

MAY EIGHTEENTH

When the Apostle said the Lord “loved” him, he did not mean that emotional affection between you and your children and friends, which expresses itself in excited speech or manner. He means that noble thing in man which we tersely term honor or charity: and

MAY

doubtless in life we feel that other word. We never can do full measure to it, and never will. But it is the best we know and so we call it love.

MAY NINETEENTH

Some men and women deny the reality of offence, or deny God's right to judge. But where we own both, nothing is quite so hopeless as our thought of our own past life — the lost days, the broken promises, the half-kept resolutions, the ideals and failures, the hard and pitiless injury to others, and even sadder records. And yet none are worse than Paul was; and He could say "He is our *peace*."

MAY TWENTIETH

The teachings of our Lord, without His dependence upon the promises of the coming life, are almost a travesty. And as one takes fast hold on them, God's *peace* comes into his life. Men thrown to beasts, men burned in the fires are quite secure. They felt the flow of peace most distinctly when the world saw only fanatical indifference. And if the martyrs be ruled out, then what of the long lines of patient men and

women who have borne the burden and heat of long years of hard struggle, buoyed and sustained by that hope of a future life which made them not ashamed, but diligent, quiet, uncomplaining — the world's own ideal of peaceful, faithful Christians.

MAY TWENTY-FIRST

Peace with God for the past, and peace in God for the future is what most, who believe at all, account as strength for the present. What *peace* have we for that? We have God's forgiveness for Christ's sake, and God's promise for Christ's sake. But, I am told, the very people who seem most sure of forgiveness and most clear in hope, are those to whom often come most sorrows. There do seem lives into which more sorrow comes than into others; but what seems to me most clear is the impartial admission of trial into *all* lives. Nor is there any indistinctness in Bible statements that trial is not the evidence of curse, but is often the evidence of blessing. It is not easy to read Providence. But one thing is plain, the life undisturbed is often the least Christian, because least moved to do its share. Dives was counted

MAY

an enviable man, he fared sumptuously: and Lazarus was a beggar. But the Lord leaves no doubt of what He thought was the result of a life undisturbed. Have you noticed in reading the Book of Judges how the refrain comes, "And the land had rest forty years," and immediately after, "And Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord"?

MAY TWENTY-SECOND

It is the very natural cry from men when they have made mistakes, when they have complicated the plans of Providence and made their fulfilling more difficult, and brought confusion where an absolute adherence to right would have kept things more simple, to call out for the Lord, somehow or other, to put things straight, not to allow one's actual fault to cause any great inconvenience, but some way to keep up both ends, and let the results be as little embarrassing as possible.

MAY TWENTY-THIRD

Abundant blessing is offered of the Almighty, but the outcome must be where human choice

MAY

will have it, and where human selection arrests the hand of even the Almighty, as the Jewish soldier's manacle held the hand of Christ in that moment when He was trying to heal the ear of an enemy whom His own servant had struck. You ask how can human power arrest Divine? My answer is, by human will and human choice.

MAY TWENTY-FOURTH

I speak with the utmost caution, and I trust with the greatest care, of a matter which goes at once to the hearts of us all, when I speak of a broken home. And you will tell me the broken homes are comparatively few, and let us praise God that that is true. But the broken homes are absolutely far too many: and if by God's blessing in your Christian land unbroken homes outnumber so greatly the broken ones, yet beyond all denial one of our distressing moral facts is, that public opinion is loose and faulty as to when and where the homes may be broken without its serious censure. With deepest sympathy for injured love, with no too quick judgment upon human frailty, yet who this minute can measure the evil influence of a growing, vicious

MAY

custom in the false estimate of the sanctity of home among our people? If the growing, coming life finds that *right* is an adjustable guess in the life between husband and wife, then where on earth is the young life to learn any practical ideal of right as separate from wrong?

MAY TWENTY-FIFTH

God's Spirit is held within no such limits as you and I are. He uses a meek man, but giant in strength, like Moses: or He uses a whirlwind of fire like Elijah, and then after him the quiet Elisha. He uses at the same moment the mystic John, and the bold John the Baptist, the enthusiastic Peter, and the strong, tough, determined Paul — these are all men of Spirit-Power in the first instance, and in reserve. God knows when and where He is allowed to distil this tremendous secret force, which in every age has allowed keepers to wake martyrs from a child-like sleep to find themselves the next moment in the clutch of a beast more merciful than the man who set him on: which now and ever turns a weak will into the power of God against an evil habit.

MAY TWENTY-SIXTH

The best Christian people who ever lived have sometime or other grown weary of watching. And tempters human and inhuman make the most of this: "Oh, come now, you can't always be praying, you can't be a saint all the time. What! always fast and vigil, always watch and prayer?" Human nature, poor feeble thing, can't do that *all* the time. And yet it cannot afford to neglect the attempt. Some companion comes to you young people. "Come now, just go into this: it isn't much." And for the moment you may be carried off your guard, the thing is unlooked for, and you may go down under it. Or a sudden provocation of temper may be upon you: you can't always defend yourself: righteous indignation and genuine human sinful anger live very near together. And you say "The tempter was near, close upon me." Yes: and so was Someone else. "In an hour when ye think not, The Son of Man cometh." What? Christ comes in my little temptations? Possibly. Rid yourself of that word "comes," and read "The Son of Man is alongside of you!" He is often there for reproof. Will He condemn?

MAY

Did He condemn Peter? He rebuked him: He condemned Judas. But the look which rebuked Peter *saved* him. There was at least some *reserve* which had been growing in Peter's soul-life during these three years: in Judas it was the snuff of a dead flame. Which shall it be in yours?

MAY TWENTY-SEVENTH

Humility which hinders a duty is not humility but the opposite.

True humility never boasts a fault.

Honest humility must, in its nature, shrink from responsibility, just as Moses did: but when once it is made to know God's commands, it leads as Moses did.

MAY TWENTY-EIGHTH

The best, most useful, most valuable friend you ever had is the man or woman who stands out from all which they ever said or did, simply the man or the woman, who and what God made them. You may make a fortune, and secure it: you may build a house, and leave it: paint a picture and frame it: write a poem and print it. And these may do good work for men. But out

MAY

and away above all that ever anyone did, is what the man or woman *is*.

Never a man did work but that man was larger in his personal force than the work which he did. Never a woman sent out from her home good women and strong men, but that mother was greater in her personal force than any child who grew beneath her care.

MAY TWENTY-NINTH

Our great human life here is like a huge organ — a strange, wonderful instrument, multiform past man's knowledge in pipe and stop and cunning connections, and its great key-board is swept by a Master's hand, which sometimes rolls out the sombre notes of a storm, and over it all sends a human cry to warn and to call. And ever through the ages the theme changes and is changing to richest song of the Artist's own endless triumph, and the sound gathers in volume, until out and over it, from millions which no man numbers, come the words, "Salvation unto our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever."

MAY

MAY THIRTIETH

Abraham's servants no doubt felt a good deal of interest, and if they had known how much was at stake, they would have been overwhelmed with interest. But they did not know what was involved. They never got beyond the point of the ordinary routine of the journey: they packed and unpacked the beasts, they pitched the tents — they were really very obedient, useful people. And so are many of us. We pitch tents, and fold them: we pack and unpack, and really are very good routine servants. But about a great heart-searching command, demanding almost a life-hope for sacrifice, demanding the nearest and dearest, and the coming face to face in prayer with the Almighty Heart-Searcher, to plead with Him in all this — why, how many of us can claim any such praying as that?

God give us to know the difference between the routine of a servant's life, and the cry to God of that man, travelling to the height whence he returned God's great "friend."

MAY THIRTY-FIRST

Find the distinction: there is the growth called Christianity, which as a part of its yield gives something tremendously akin to Socialism: and don't pick up the plant Socialism pure and simple, and expect it to boil out Christianity.

JUNE

JUNE FIRST

There never was or will be a man or woman "too good" for the humblest place where men and women may be led to worship and serve God.

JUNE SECOND

You may have had many a moment of honest enquiry in your life, and you may have been very earnest in your desire for the truth. But to what did it lead you? You may have been following a star somewhere, or some half-truth, and God saw you were perfectly honest: what else did He see?

JUNE THIRD

I know a mother can and does, in her sweet affection, make a child understand her long before the child knows one word of language: and God's love is as imperious and impatient of threatened danger as even a mother's, and somehow He has sent thought from Heaven, where we can speak only in the tongue of earth!

JUNE FOURTH

Evil must have a human agent somewhere, and involve human responsibility. Evil as a theory may be one thing, but evil as a leaven means a human heart and will behind it. So good, even the greatest good, God's love, must have a human agent somewhere, a human heart and mind and will to carry on His influence in the world.

JUNE FIFTH

Nothing is plainer than the hopelessness of a mere human heart's ever reaching in actual life the story of the Nazarene. If we are to trace, now in this act, now in that, an exacted task wherein we must reach the life of Christ, or fail heaven, we may well enough abandon the whole as hopeless. The best of men are yet men at best.

JUNE SIXTH

By all means, most thankfully receive the Lord's great sacrifice to free you from punishment due for sin, but with it also DAILY endeavor to follow His holy steps! Men who see you walking in the one will listen when you tell them of the blessedness of the other.

JUNE

JUNE SEVENTH

Doubtless you and I must at times rest from work, but we may, by God's grace, never rest from righteousness. And while we rest from work, God is not sleeping, and He will have someone keep our night-watch, and He will see that there *is* no night-watch to love and right!

JUNE EIGHTH

I often think of Elijah — this man with a great modern character — as a great towering mountain, his head away up in the glories of heaven's air and light, because his own God-made, rock-ribbed life of pure faith would not and could not sink to the level of faith and life where the guilty Ahab, his guiltier queen, and the aping rabble had sunk. Elijah was still up on the old Hebrew level, where God is one, and pure and true and holy. God had made him unable to sink. And a great mountain, mind you, not only makes a glorious landscape, but it *rules* it. The stream must bend and rush as its sides may *will*: men must direct their roadways as that mountain allows: and the atmosphere must be wet or dry, cold or hot, as the great dominant

JUNE

hill may allow or actually decree. And men whom God has made too fixed in holy faith to sink to a low level, stand up in the great world's landscape, as we travel the ages, and dominate, if they do not dictate, the life and energy of their life and time. So did this man of God in his day: and One greater than all in His.

JUNE NINTH

We should live soberly (that is toward ourselves): righteously (that is toward other people): and Godly (that is toward our Maker).

JUNE TENTH

He rebukes selfish indulgence: I do not remember that He ever rebuked the misery of sin.

The only time rebuke ever does good is when it is delivered with heartache for the wrong, and hope as example of the right.

JUNE ELEVENTH

The man who is always choosing the better among the good is not only the best, but the only help in a day of dangers.

JUNE

JUNE TWELFTH

Do I mean that the Church of to-day is to bring dead men to life? I mean this, that your Church is none, unless it can go to stricken homes, and by word of Christ — not by speculation, not by some debate, not by apologetic, timid hint — but by warrant of God's own awful word in and by Christ, stand by the sorrowing, and make them believe it truth, "Behold, thy son lives!" Our weakness is that we are not God's messengers as He means us to be! Don't stop to debate. Obey the Master, and preach to all.

JUNE THIRTEENTH

Naaman was great enough, after being offended, to stop and remember the word "obey." Are we?

Can God's eye find in us whole-hearted submission, surrender and faith?

JUNE FOURTEENTH

To a human eye, the majesty of redemption began when a whole nation, roused from slavery, broke through armies and plunged, by strange paths, through the seas to liberty to fight for

JUNE

God and truth! But, we are told, that to an angel eye, it reached its *glory* when the Mighty One reached down His blessed hand, and touching a poor cripple in body and soul, healed both body and soul in forgiving love, "Son be of good cheer: thy sins be forgiven thee."

JUNE FIFTEENTH

The Apostle did not say that money was the root of all evil, but he did say the love of it was.

JUNE SIXTEENTH

You can burn a human body till not a trace of it can be found. Can you annihilate great human thought and affection, conscience and belief?

If muscle and morality are the same thing, then Nero's school for gladiators was of more use than the work of St. Peter and St. Paul, both of whom probably suffered under his axe.

JUNE SEVENTEENTH

No one ever knew the power of physical pain better than He: none ever came with touch to heal like His — through days of toil and vigils

JUNE

by night, through hours of weariness and the article of death, through all the world—built fires into which a human life is ever flung—He tried it all, pain, and thirst and want and death. He is the Ideal of dreamy reformers, the Object of Christian worship, the Standard of earth's philanthropy, God of the Christian Church, the one only Being in the story of this ever-burning bush of human life wherein the bush and God are one. There this message comes, and a hope far beyond the hour of suffering, beyond our physical death, comes and goes the voice of God in His promise, "I have seen the affliction of My people."

JUNE EIGHTEENTH

Turn to the exquisite story of the Prodigal. This surely is the Gospel! And is not the most beautiful part of the story the truth that *wherever* the boy was he was always the Father's son? A wayward boy at home, a thankless one amid vile men and women, a beggar dying in want—everywhere and always the son, the story only complete when the Father's kiss stayed the confession of his sin!

Do you assume that you are forgiven: do you

JUNE

exact forgiveness, or do you receive it as God's gift?

JUNE NINETEENTH

Can you and I drop the critic and cease the complaint against our Master and His people long enough to learn our own privilege of repentance and blessing, and lead by kindness others in gratitude to Christ?

JUNE TWENTIETH

God help us to know that down from Heaven's ocean of love plunges there by Golgotha a cataract of compassion which no cup of your measure or mine will ever contain, enough to slake the thirst of a multitude which no *man* can number.

It was this which made Phillips Brooks what he was, he was great enough to feel the width of God's love.

JUNE TWENTY-FIRST

"Is it not plain that men have gained by the temptation, are they not stronger for the trial and struggle? Was it not better that man should sin?" says someone, and a great deal of

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speculation is let loose. Let us remember that no cautious man undertakes to read history backwards. A few very confident men are ready to tell you what would have happened if Napoleon had won at Waterloo, and what if Cornwallis had won at Yorktown. But as a rule men are content to admit that they do not know *what* would have happened if history at some point had been other than it was. Two things are plain: one is that Adam and Eve did disobey: and the other is that the scriptures everywhere in both Testaments represent it as a loss. Is it not best for us to try to deal with the case as it stands?

JUNE TWENTY-SECOND

One material in that robe for the feast will be humility. The woman longed for a knowledge which would put her alongside of God Himself. It came to her under the deceit of the name of wisdom, which proved to be folly, and under the promise of an elevation which proved to be the deepest degradation. A longing for selfish human pride to reach out and take from the wardrobe of heaven the very garment of God. A frightful cheat that was! And many

JUNE

have felt it since. Many a woman reached for the decorations of indulgence, and found only the rags of poverty. Who, save Christ and His angels, knows the sorry record of where and how the folly of childish discontent, working with proud, selfish desire, has hurried men and women, boys and girls, far from the gaudy finery which they had craved, and left them at last robed in the cheating world's castaway garments? How very far from this is that promised robe of the great feast of the marriage of the King's son!

JUNE TWENTY-THIRD

Few men are willing to pray falsehood, and hesitating at first to, they learn to confess the truth.

JUNE TWENTY-FOURTH

The Baptist was a rare man, quite as good as his own sermons.

But he only held the door for the passing through of Him whose shoe latchet John himself was not worthy to touch and tie. And yet there can be no Christ come without John. There can be no Christ without God's voice

JUNE

within us, and John was only a voice! God forbid that that voice should come within, and there be no Christ to answer its cry for help. His life was greater than John's His Morality was higher, because gentler, wider, because out of His life came the preaching that while thought and heart may be the place of sin, they must be also the place of right and truth!

JUNE TWENTY-FIFTH

It is a blessed fact that while some of the great historic buildings have laid in their walls huge stones, almost impossible it would seem for the engineering of that day to manage, yet most of the enduring building under which civilization has grown and gained, has been done with small bricks, and some with only adobe mud, sun-dried, but useful and lasting. With just such people God does His building. We can never get a place among the Davids, catching at lions and bears, and beating them to death: knocking down giants and killing them with their own swords. Times come when that thing has to be done, and then come Davids and Pauls to do it. But those times are not many, and God in His forbearing patience is

JUNE

content to work along with the Sons of Kish, the family where you and I, in our clever caution, belong. What part are we taking in just this commonplace, slow building-work?

JUNE TWENTY-SIXTH

Anybody can criticize Christians. All of us wonder at the quarrels within the church, we are ashamed of her murders, we bemoan her mistakes, we regret her divisions, we mourn over the follies of individuals, and then we stop and thank God for a great entity, and a great reality, a force which cannot be ignored, a strange ever-growing building, whose grey walls are the wonder of nineteen centuries of work, whose marvellous pillars and arches have sheltered thousands of human souls, some sorrowing, some mourning, some sinking beneath oppressive sense of guilty shame. And within these sheltering walls weak women and beaten men have regained their strength and now come to tell us, as swells the chorus of God's praises ever fuller and fuller through arch and aisle, how dark indulgence and deep guilt have ceased their horrid hold, how despair has given way to gladdest hope, and cries of defeat to hymns of triumph in Him who is

JUNE

Foundation and Corner-Stone, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

JUNE TWENTY-SEVENTH

To me the demand that anybody shall take up the Bible and read it as any other book is either an impossibility, or is a demand upon which I should insist with all my heart.

By all means read it as you would read any other book, read it with all the prejudices of the years around and about it, the prejudice of belief instead of doubt, of reverence instead of suspicion.

It does an immense amount of harm to forget what we are reading when we read the Holy Scriptures, and especially when we profess to be reading the record of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Read it as you would any other book, with such a history, atmosphere, dignity and influence as this one: giving us the profoundest essays on government, and the deepest thought on human responsibility, morals and life.

JUNE TWENTY-EIGHTH

The battle was fought between self and love, and love won.

JUNE TWENTY-NINTH

St. Peter is more human, if not more humane, than John the Baptist: because against John we know no charges of broken law. But John is impossible to us, where St. Peter is simply a penitent man.

JUNE THIRTIETH

The Christian Church began in Jesus of Nazareth, and in the ages of heaven will be lost in the family of God.

The saint in heaven is the man forgiven his sin on earth.

JULY

JULY FIRST

Our forgiveness of others is the gauge of how far God's stream of forgiving love has risen in our own hearts.

It is not my forgiving someone else which makes my salvation: Christ's life and death did all that: and my forgiving others is because the stream of love pushes me on to do just that, among much else.

In God's name, keep the stream of His mighty grace and salvation rushing through your lives till you can forgive all mankind! and God and angels see that you do it from no weariness and weakness of nature, nor cowardly fear that you may lose some favor!

JULY SECOND

By perfect work he means the best of which each is capable. There is a perfection of God which is ideal perfection; there is a perfection of Christ which is complete perfection; and there is a perfection of St. John which is far above anything of which you and I are capable.

JULY

But there is a perfection of human beings which is simply and only the best of which men and women are capable. And God knows, as no one else can know, that of which we are capable:

I never expect to be a saint, as men call it. nor does God ask it. I know not why men insist upon a standard which God has not set. But I do ask that I may have His Spirit to keep me under, that wherewith He shall lead me to what is my possibility of soul life. The very best of which Peter and Paul and John and the Baptist, and Jesus, were capable was *patience*, come of prayer, and *power*, this moment beyond any names known to men on earth!

JULY THIRD

The Kingdom of God admits the standard of neither myself nor of the one who has harmed me. There is but one standard, and that is the standard of Jesus Christ. The Christian man, I don't mean the mere professor, but one who accepts Jesus, may regret and deplore the failure of right in himself or in others, but at the risk of sacrilege he may not dare to change the standard. He may ask for forbearance in judgment:

JULY

but he has no right to apologize for wrong.
The Kingdom of God is righteousness.

JULY FOURTH

If there is anywhere to be found a clear truth, I believe it to be that God *does* inspire nations. But is it only the nation? God speaks to some men in a way to lift them clear up and beyond their race-inspiration. Doubtless the pulpit has loaded on to Scripture what the Spirit never taught: mistaken men have claimed inspiration which came not from the Spirit of Truth — admit it all, but do not tell us that the Almighty never breathed into and through one man truth which He did not, and never meant to, breathe into any other soul, a message from the God of power. Doubtless, mind you, when the Spirit chose this man, He took one whom He had placed in the midst of a long, wise, faithful race-training, a man who could not come anywhere else: but then breathed through his heart and life what He trusted to no one else. Stretch ~~them~~ as He stretches the peaks of eternal snows, at the longest intervals: but leave us these in-breathed heroes!

JULY FIFTH

Between the soul, however conscious of offense, and the Almighty Judge of us all, there is a peace offered. If one is too indifferent to ask it, or so proud as to deny it, or so persistent as to defy it, he does not destroy it for other people, he only robs himself.

“But, how can it be peace, if I am not conscious of it?” It is more important that the Almighty should realize there is peace between Him and us than that we should. Our salvation depends upon His knowledge of peace. But our happiness depends upon our knowledge of it. There are many saved Christians who are not happy Christians, and many pardoned prodigals who still insist upon serving for wages, and some who cling even to the bondage of slaves, children in the Father’s house, forgiven and welcomed, and can’t believe it!

JULY SIXTH

We cannot command joy, we cannot pursue it, we cannot even grasp it when it comes of itself; it follows, or it never comes at all. It is a resultant, never an aim of life. It is a re-

JULY

ward, but never a purpose in life. It is the gift of God if it come.

JULY SEVENTH

There have always been the two teachings, God's presence, and the effort to make men feel it: God's absence, and the effort to order life on God's absence. It is not nominal belief we are after, it is to realize, and make men realize, God's presence. Adam believed in God, there is nothing new in the union of belief and disobedience: but men need to know that if they do not meet God under the tree of knowledge, then they *must* meet Him as He walks with them later in the cool of the day, when they are trying to hide from His presence and the effects of guilt, and contempt of His rule.

JULY EIGHTH

Let men say what they will, "admiration" is exactly what they have for that body of faulty human beings known as the Church of the living God, the blessed company of all faithful people! The Lord is not unreflected in our midst. The ages praise God for Christ and His redeemed ones. Not all such lives are written for men's

JULY

eyes to read, but the life lies calmly in the vision of the Lord, and He and His see Him therein! You may think your life too tiny to reflect, or be watched. But a very small mirror held at a proper angle will let you examine the greatest temple on earth: and a mirror in a telescope will bring to you the largest body in the heavens above us. If lives were measured as to scale, not many would have picked out as a large one the widow in the temple: but Christ said that she had reflected the very glory of God in her lowly self-denial and humble gift to Him!

JULY NINTH

How many lives run through a dreary round of days and years and never have any praise! Some man carries his hod, drags his drudgery, ends his day, collects his earnings, goes to his home, eats, sleeps and rises to toil again, each day like the last. Some woman goes through the round of her toil, faulty doubtless at many points, and the fault promptly found and mentioned, if not in her home, then outside it: but where approval has been earned, it has never been spoken, and each day comes and goes like the last. The saddest part is that in all such

cases, it never occurs to anyone that any right has failed in life. Drudging man, toiling woman, nowhere anyone ever hinted they had any right to praise. Bad enough in these weary walks and toils, but this is true of life in a far higher sphere, the day comes and the day goes! Sometimes censure is escaped, but at any point — praise? Would a man resent it, does a woman's heart desire it? Yes, many a one is heart-hungry for it. And what disgusts rightminded men is flattery, which assumes to distribute what only discriminating love and right thought and good conscience have a right to give. The thoughtless flinging broadcast of words of approval, conveying anything from a modicum of truth to a pack of society lies, is one thing; right approval of a right action is another. Applause may be given by a crowd, fame may come from the many, but praise must come from one who has the right to bestow it, for right action done or attempted. It rises in its scale, from parent to child, from kindest friend, husband, or wife, leader or ruler, on up till at last it rests where best it belongs, in the heart and word of the truest Friend, incapable of misleading; each shall have his praise of God.

JULY TENTH

Use God's light to find God's way.

God's light cannot lie.

God knows that your life and mine are limited, that we are after all very small people, very hum-drum ordinary folk, living very matter-of-fact, unpoetic lives. But His flood of light will show exactly our heart-life, it will show Him whether we do honestly and earnestly turn to God, and wish for Him and work for Him. It will show whether or not the ruling desire, the chief wish of that heart is to serve Him!

JULY ELEVENTH

The climax of a world's life and a Church's battle is not to be what we have gained or lost, or a counting table to tell us what we have given, or the number of our prayers, or the record of our deeds, though the Judge will know them all. But the climax will be words, spoken to one who held a single trust, which had gained for God's treasury. Christ's praise is this, "Well done!"

JULY

JULY TWELFTH

We need to measure carefully the words, "He scourges every son whom he receives." It is some frightful minute in your lives, when if you don't say it, others will say it for you, "What on earth has he done? Why should this come to him?" Nine times out of ten God never did, and never could command the event. God never built the image of Nebuchadnezzar to be worshipped. He did not light the fires of the furnace, but He let the Three Children of captivity go through them, that the bands which heathenism had wound round them might be burned off. When the bands are burned off, we walk toward all that goes for God and truth.

God's fires burn, but they do not destroy.

JULY THIRTEENTH

Reverence for your fellow-man is only the manward reach of the same blessed cord which binds you to the very throne and heart of God.

JULY FOURTEENTH

"I have called you friends." The personal touch, friend to friend, heart to heart, the close

JULY

confidence by which the secret purpose is told and explained, motives are laid bare, aims are made plain; and when then some great man dies, the one nearest to him in his life of thought is chosen to tell what he was. They talked freely, they communed closely, the Teacher found a willing heart and an open ear, the confidence and affection of friendship. And ever as the pupil listens, he grows nearer His Teacher, learns Him better, and rises in the scale of life and work. So have lesser men gone out ever to carry to the multitude the treasures received at the hands of the great and good. Here in these words the Lord puts the truth that there are those who come to Him in the intimacy of friendship, and gain more of the knowledge of their Lord than others can have. The very secret of heaven is with them; with them there is no theorizing on fine-spun lines, for right is with them the eternal, unchanging, essential will and nature of the holy and pure God over all.

JULY FIFTEENTH

The reason why Scripture is written is plainly to appeal to men and women here. It is of this life and its possibilities that we are taught.

JULY

This world, this awful and majestic life, so little with annoyance, so majestic with duty, so trying with temptations, so magnificent with service, so narrow with self, so wide with love, is the house and home where was God's nursery and school and workhouse for the ideal Man who lived on heaven's lines to save man from his sins.

JULY SIXTEENTH

Drive men back to an honest expression of an honest thought, and you will find them contending for belief in the true, pure and holy God.

I know men believe God is good, however they wonder amid the trying events of human life: and I know they believe because the good Christ has lived and served and died.

JULY SEVENTEENTH

Truly humble men, humble under the mighty hand of God, because that is mighty, are not cowardly, they are brave! Brave as He was, who before Pilate, hard representative of all the great world-power of the day, yet "witnessed His good confession"! And oh! for the day when

JULY

you and I may, by His grace, be humble and brave because He was, and *as* He was!

JULY EIGHTEENTH

I may do right, and be right, and be as hard as iron: but if I am to be kind, I must sometimes ignore the wrong in those whom I would help. No censorious kindness, which insults with its reproof while trying to help with alms, but the kindness such that even God's hand can write before it "loving"!

What is not kind is not useful: what is useful is kind: and what is both useful and kind is Christian.

JULY NINETEENTH

Suppose some life ordinarily as wide as the play hours of social life will allow, wide with feast and song and merry-making, is suddenly narrowed and kept within the ordered limits of a deep, crushing sorrow. I may send a kind note of sympathy — better that than nothing; I may send flowers to do their kindly errand of good-will. But by God's rare privilege, I may be able to narrow my life and draw it quite within the sombre limits of my friend's grief.

JULY

Then, only then, have I got within his life. I look around within his narrowed circle. I crowd my else wider life in his. But in all these cases, if the one coming from without, by the magic, power of love, has really gained an entrance and not merely a presence, in the man's life, then he brings all the wider life of love and hope which is in his own. Precisely this was the miracle of Jesus' ministry! He came into the life of those who would let Him in, and comes!

JULY TWENTIETH

The world is always jealous of its actual servants. But they last longest who out of a consistent life into which themselves have been saved and lifted, thereafter tell most truly and wisely the curse of evil with its killing power, and with it the blessing of good and its immortal life.

JULY TWENTY-FIRST

There lacks not intellectual power in the Christian pulpit, let men say what they will; but the power of the pulpit is never in intellect, it is when we come into your lives and lay before you, not some hint of our own, or some dis-

JULY

covery of our own making, but some blessed message from Christ, delivered in His own words!

Christ's intellect silenced Pharisees and Sadducees: Christ's love *saved* an outcast!

JULY TWENTY-SECOND

Salvation is at last the *thought* of God! But one answers "I cannot think it." I mean no disrespect, my brother, I mean just the opposite, when I say, You can't help thinking it! God may have dragged you with no wrench at the gate of Damascus, but God has poured over the soil of your life dew of love and grace: and He has flung about the roots of your life holy truths, and up through every tendril have gone these strange marvels of loving grace till it is fairly ingrained in your whole mental structure! Let the Christ-thought do its work: no glare of light will be needed, but deep past all harming will grow the cluster whence mayhap angel hands (you may think, in sorrow; God will know it is in love) will press out the wine of God's service in all of mind and all of life. One greater than you needed the wine-press ere the blood of the grape came to be the

JULY

wine of the children's feast. God only knows when your life shall yield that which will make glad the heart of angels and of God, for all heaven is roused to save a sinning soul!

JULY TWENTY-THIRD

Do you not find sometimes, as you read some book, or hear some word, that there floats up from your heart a sigh, a sort of wish, an impulse to do something *good* for others? and then it dies away only an impulse! Or it goes on to a resolution to do this or that, to be more regular at service, more careful in reading, to try to help someone. All are good, all are good clear water from a pure spring: and they run off unused! Does such experience suggest a Christ-converted will? The will converted *by* Christ is surely converted *to* Him. If Christ had touched those impulses, they would have been turned into some good *act*.

JULY TWENTY-FOURTH

Who would ever hunt for a hero of love in a skin-flint money-getter? Jesus found him hid in a tree overhanging the road. "Come down,

JULY

Zacchaeus, I will dine with thee." He converted the meanest of men, converted will into act, selfishness into kindness, ill-doing into restoration, and ill-gotten gain into service of God!

JULY TWENTY-FIFTH

That was a long, sad record of people, stretching back through forty years of wandering life, people who never knew home. Egypt was the driver's pen: Palestine was never reached; tented they lived, tented they died. How many ever learned of the eternal thought and care and love which made up God, and made Him home? And many a poor soul through the years gone has toiled as they did, some in wide houses and some in narrow cottages, some wanderers, and some tied to a tiny place, their record is done: how much was home here? How much was home when they slept eternal sleep? How many of us will let the Spirit of all Truth teach us that God the eternal is the only Home for immortal lives?

JULY TWENTY-SIXTH

What your meditation for ideal man may be is one thing: God's ideal is Jesus Christ.

JULY

JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH

Very old is the Hebrew poet's figure of wanderers from God's care, "All we like sheep had gone astray," — little children out over the wide plain, the wide desert of life, dreaming and wandering, seeking we know not what, this man for his rude ideal of God, impatient of rebuke for his folly; that one gone out over some foolish pathway to indulge an old-time hate, which can last but for a night-watch: this one to heap up some gain, hardly honest, and soon to be dust: another to indulge some sad, foolish habit, ruining life and all ideal thereof, till it is done and rebuked: and the best of us out here, out there, dreaming our own dreams, careless, ignorant or neglecting the great ideal dream — while out after us comes the patient, never-failing Shepherd to draw us back.

JULY TWENTY-EIGHTH

"My meat is to do my Father's will." That is God's dream of man! Can we reach it? Not in this ~~life~~ life. But to follow it is His call to us. Nay, that is God's dream for *you*! To think His thought, try for His aim, believe His truth,

JULY

love His right. Time itself has been too short for the best of poor human stuff to reach that: but time, if counted as God teaches, is long enough to *begin* to do it.

JULY TWENTY-NINTH

We fault our Father when our plans fail, when for plenty we have need; for love, a quarrel; for power, humiliation; for indulgence, disappointment; but why fault Him? These are *our* dreams, they are not His. His dream is His ideal thought, that through all eternity you may think and trust and hope and learn and love and strive, you may *live* in Christ, and your life be hid with Him in God.

JULY THIRTIETH

To help poor, timid men; to aid an affrighted conscience; to try to make the battle easier, men have tried to put men feeble as we are between us and God. Priests of false religions, and priests on false ground in the true one, have all been marshalled in somehow between ourselves and our God. "Come," they say, "come to us, we will absolve you, we will pray for you,"

JULY

we will direct you." Let us thank God that men may pray for other men, may tell by warrant of Christ Himself that sin is forgiven of God upon repentance, that they may give all the aid of earnest, devoted, loving sympathy in the struggle against sin and wrong, — let us thank God for all this great human aid. And then let us thank God that at last there comes a moment when there is not even an angel of heaven between the soul which strives and fights and wins and the God who pities and sustains and forgives.

JULY THIRTY-FIRST

There comes some awful, deep mystery, where the soul feels the very breath of God: some moment of struggle, when there stands with us none save Him who stood with the children in the fiery furnace. Not the weary, dreary, ever-repeating story of temptation and sin, but the strange, ever-newer life come back from the lost day, the life of God in our own soul, to make us overcome!

AUGUST

AUGUST FIRST

I do not remember a single passage in which the gracious Lord ever rebukes amusement as such. I do not remember one sentence in which men are warned to keep out of one place, and enter another. He was Himself a guest at feasts, and owned that He laid Himself open to be charged by indiscriminating criticism with being a wine-bibber and a glutton. But the one passage where He ever spoke in terms akin to contempt of men, was when He charged childishness because men complained He would not change to suit their varying whims, now of gloom, and then of play! No man wants a trifler near him. It is not that some one indulgence may be in itself harm; nor is it that this place is right, and that one wrong — it is hard to mark places safely. But it is not hard to see why a mind and soul and life filled with self — indulged fault, or ruled by play, never can take hold of the *reality* of life!

AUGUST

AUGUST SECOND

No one has quite so much power to slide a hint into your mind as the companion who shares your relaxation. You won't allow him to preach, but you can't hinder a suggestion which may stay with you till you are dead. Oh! it is a weary truth, full of tired and tiring sounds, that nowhere from Eden to the fairest hillside of to-day can the watch against the power of the tempter be for one moment relaxed. Watch, Watch, always Watch! is the tiresome guard.

AUGUST THIRD

I do not say, "Always go to Church." I say this, "Don't relax conscience in anything, least of all in holy things." The Holy Day itself, and holy words, especially those of your Bible and Prayer-Book, are things which suffer most in the easy talk of a summer hotel, and still worse in some hospitable country-seat.

My friend, I ask no following of my theories of Sabbath sanctity, and no guard of my poor making against subtle error and cunning wrong, be it for moments of haste, or the lazy hour of

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needed rest. I do pray, as God gives me, that when honest appeals of honest pulpit men and true are done, your blessing may be that of the men at the Transfiguration, to "see no man, save Jesus only."

AUGUST FOURTH

A fault grown indistinct through long knowledge is pretty sure to become a fault which we make no effort to contend and mend.

Somehow an avoided duty has a way of getting back to find the one who dodged.

AUGUST FIFTH

You may have your ideal, and you may not have reached Christ's ideal for you. Yours would make you in every way a respectable man: but Christ in your life would make you a Christian man. If at any point you have found the ideal where you are content to rest, then, hard as is the word, I tell you now the message of Jesus Christ has never reached you: and when it does, its first work will be to tear away any such idol, and fling it by some kind harshness, crumbling in dust at your feet.

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AUGUST SIXTH

It was the frightened privilege of Peter and James and John to go to the Mount of the Transfiguration, and there be face to face with the glory divine. Now, it is yours, as much as theirs. Stay there as long as you can: hallow each thought: sanctify every imagination: devote every power to God and His work: be with Him and claim as a right, for right it is, that there shall be between you and God not even Moses and Elias, not even law and prophecy, nothing "save Jesus only."

AUGUST SEVENTH

How many homes would be far happier, if instead of some dream-life, which never can come and never ought to come, men and women, boys and girls, could learn that they would be most men and women, most near the great ideal, when the awful thought of our God in His care was just to keep us in that way where He has put us — some little duty, very tiresome, but worthy an angel's thought to help you to do it: some drudgery, the man at his desk, the boy at

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his toil, be it what it may. And every man of any power must ever see just beyond him some aim higher far than he now reaches, since life is on God's scale, and not on ours. Be like Christ in the willingness to believe that God cares most to see us where He has put us.

AUGUST EIGHTH

There is not a soul in all this world, who believes in Jesus Christ at all, or any part of His gracious ministry, who does not feel that, contradictory to human dreams of idle indulgence as it may all be, yet at last the one spot on earth where to us all Heaven is nearest to earth, is precisely the Cross of the Lord at Calvary.

AUGUST NINTH

I cannot and do not speak to you, unless you know in actual life something of the intensity of the struggle of this world. If life is so easy you know none of its trials, and so fair you know no gloom, and so even you have been dragged over no rough ways: if sin is so hidden that you know it only as speculation or annoyance: if you have never seen or heard the cry

of a heart beaten in its life effort; if you have never felt the plea of conscience as it rebuked you, then I cannot speak to you of what I believe is the JOY of heaven's struggles in behalf of men. But, my friend, if you have ever stood absolutely beaten before some object of devoted love, if life forces have gathered in close, hot attack until the good seemed rolled back before resistless wrong, if you have pleaded for some precious life, and plead only to have it go, if any or all of these have come to you, and then if you were where you could find the Messenger sent with absolute assurance of success, where you knew Satan and all his guilt would be rolled back, then are you such as not to feel just this JOY of heaven, cost though it did the Life of Galilee, and the Death of Golgotha? Could you not welcome the heaven where not to know earth's trials would be fault, and not to share the mighty effort to redeem would disturb heaven, and rob it of its holy and blessed privilege? If I were told that heaven did not know what even I know of sorrow and suffering and want and their wreck, and it were a curtained pavilion, behind which lazy human hearts might indulge seclusion, I do not think I

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would care for the Father who lived in such an atmosphere. But if knowledge there is keener, as love pure and holy can bring, that interest wells up till in its current the very Prince of all is swept down through Golgotha, then such a heaven is the home whose Father is One to love, because He first loved me. God be praised for Jesus' creed, God in mercy give it me for my prayer, "Our Father, Who Art in Heaven."

AUGUST TENTH

We are self-reliant, until life in one place or another shows us helpless; and then we long for a Leader, as do all other defeated people.

AUGUST ELEVENTH

It is apt to be an exceptional Christian character which is deepened in its humility by prosperity. One does not wonder that prosperity leads man away from God, rather than to Him. For it opens up so many indulgences, and makes this great earth a place where so much amusement can be had, that there is no special need of looking for any other kind of service. There are to-day men and women who were careful

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and cautious people until they had money enough to get into a lot of associations where they could not get before. People who talk wisely and correctly about amusements and shun them, get a very different estimate of the whole thing when they are able to afford them. And so amusements, by no means necessarily injurious, become so bye and bye when means increase, and people turn thought away from God to play. "In all time of our prosperity, good Lord, deliver us."

AUGUST TWELFTH

There is this strange thing about Christian life in the home, — like all other healing, those who have it gain in strength. The world soon made up its mind, and has kept it so, that Jesus Christ's morality must make man less manly and strong. And the Church long ago learned, and holds against all challenge, that men most Christ-taught are strongest for all of life.

AUGUST THIRTEENTH

I know many people who because they cannot see *now* what God is doing with them, and can-

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not see the end, at once conclude God is cruel and harsh. But while your life and mine are only tiny, yet why doubt that, in our realm and sphere, God has some ultimate use in all that He lays upon us? When He shall have found that we can be trusted with His work, we shall be. And a man or woman worthy of training is always trained for something.

AUGUST FOURTEENTH

We make public opinion: you and I, the very humblest of us, are held responsible for it, because we are responsible for it. Our most careless thoughts, our hastiest words make or mar it: we help cruelty on or stop it: we aid brutality, or we rebuke it: we help turn "disobedience to the wisdom of justice," or we help on folly: we help to make our people idle pleasure-seekers, or to make them the builders of a long-lived nation.

AUGUST FIFTEENTH

Whatever we may believe of ourselves, fact comes to make us believe that some do sink to the last level on earth. And when we find them, the next thing is that we will not believe

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they can be cured. First we doubt a fall, and then we deny the lifting up. But Jesus was the kindest Judge, and had the fullest belief that such men *could* be saved. That nature, crouching there, a half-naked, cringing, pitiable savage, an idiot one minute, and a worse than lion the next, held in by only one thing — the presence of absolute sinlessness. Such a being in His sight was worth all the property which could be ranged on all the hills of Galilee — for he could and did become a child of God!

AUGUST SIXTEENTH

We are so dreadfully afraid of falling into the error of an infallible Church that we decline to have any! We are so critical of St. Peter's place that we forget that the one thought which absorbed both him and His Master was that the Church was to be *built*.

"But you put into the Church men whose lives we know are not what they should be." My answer is that I suppose the Lord was as good a Judge of building material as you and I. It is plain that He found a man, who within six months stood up and in His own presence lied to all about him, and repeated his lie:

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and then fell to cursing and swearing: a man so earthy in his ideas of Christian life that he even rebuked Jesus for telling him the Christ must die—but for all that, Jesus Christ not only put that man into the walls of His building, but found a place for Him in the human elements of its very foundation: and marvelously good material it was.

AUGUST SEVENTEENTH

Wise use of worship is God's plan for your touching Him. Worship is never for the purpose of having some human plan touch you: it is a Divine plan to have you touch the Almighty. There is a touch of ceremony and form: and there is a touch of faith and prayer. No human priest's robe in any land, or any day, or any service, has ever conveyed holiness. But let us remember the woman in the crowd: the touch of the Lord's garment made her whole. And heart-worship secures Christ's touch of blessing, indispensable and immeasurable.

AUGUST EIGHTEENTH

Who are God's gamblers? Where Satan tempted, Christ refused: where love led, Christ

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risked all. And surely His gamblers are those who this night toil through patient hours, bear patient burdens, endure trials, any cross, if it be only Christ's. And their losses, are they not many? Very many, but they are in God's hand, He swept them all into His treasury. The time when they might have trifled, the money they might have wasted, the amusement they might have had, — these are God's. So it was in Christ's story, so it is in theirs. And their winnings? Industry, patience, honesty, kindness, diligence, purity and strength *now*, and at last a hope which maketh not ashamed!

AUGUST NINETEENTH

No view of life is worth looking at which has no darker shadows in the picture!

There is a good deal of crucifixion waiting up on that hill where we are climbing in such good spirits.

AUGUST TWENTIETH

Whatever may be the immediate future, whether to warn of danger or to announce a hoped for blessing, still there is no greater blessing to any land or people than the words, "There was a man sent from God."

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AUGUST TWENTY-FIRST

The world is gradually learning that the only thing in this world which will buy a human being is another human being. Gold and silver will buy a man's time, strength and energy: and you may make him a laborer, a mechanic, a ball-player or a prize-ring champion. But when you buy the *man*, buy his thought so as to control it, buy his taste so as to direct it, buy his affection so as to hold it, buy his conscience so as to enthrone it, you will get him only as you expend of man to buy him. Man for man: thought for thought: heart for heart: conscience for conscience: soul life for soul life: to buy, to lift, to sustain, till the great Pier is found to be the Son of Man, bound up with the infinite and eternal God, to redeem, to lift, to save forever lost souls of men, for whose purchase earth had no sufficient gift.

AUGUST TWENTY-SECOND

I know no thought more full of warning, and none anywhere near so full of hope — "Such as I have, I give."

It is a grave matter that out of our records

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made in the lives of others, we are to be judged: because when least we know or mean it, what we are, and such as we have, we give them.

Get your type right, and your printing power is every way a blessing.

In one great often repeated sentence we read, "And the books were opened, and the dead were judged out of the books." And we go on truly enough to say those books are our own memories, certainly one of them is, and another is the memory and thought and conscience of those near to us, to whom we gave just "such as we have."

AUGUST TWENTY-THIRD

One of these days, somewhere in some life near us, one whom we knew well, or one who came only in the mass of life's accidental associations, there in that life the great Judge looking over His book (nay, our book) will see some cruel, sad entry of moral cowardice. "Such as I had gave I thee." Just think how dreadfully scared we get if somebody hears our voice out loud reading the Psalter inspired of God's Spirit: or saying above anyone else, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" Is it any wonder men

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outside the Church are afraid to stand up and own Christ's name? And we are all the time handing this moral cowardice down, from mumbled answers to positive refusals to say anything for God.

AUGUST TWENTY-FOURTH

Are there persons in the home, able to talk beautifully about life and its duties, with such fair theories, but who live anything but beautifully consistent lives? What of them? Inevitably, "Such as they have, they give." Down into those about them goes what they are and have. If Peter and John had the advantage of the Temple, these ordinary men and women have an opportunity far more filled with occasion for giving and receiving: there is no place like that God-given place where young life gathers around. The surfaces are clear for your writing, the face of the tablet smooth for your graver to go over it: and it will harden bye and bye with every character which you have cut — not as when you were holding forth in some careful moment of well delivered speech, but when you were simply what you were and are: when you were "giving such as you had."

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AUGUST TWENTY-FIFTH

I am not one of those who believe that it is best not to pray unless we *feel* like it. I know there are times when sin is so potent in one's thought and word and acts, that one is either defiant of, or utterly indifferent to, the Almighty God. Shall I pray when I do not care, certainly doubt, and possibly disbelieve that God ever has heard, or ever will? Of all times when prayer becomes most a duty, it is that in which God seems furthest away, ourselves most indifferent, and our prayers most useless. If you ask me why I so confidently say it, I answer that you and I know from experience that those are moments when we most need Almighty help, and dare not leave ourselves with the possibility of such a recurrence and without the help of the Spirit of Truth. And surely in our quiet moments we must know that God is the unerring King and the Father of eternal love in heaven. And his goodness is like all other infinity, unchanged and unchangeable, and therefore it is we who change, not He. Our minds are dull, our hearts are chill. And if it is the chill of the faith which God has given, then in the name of

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our Saviour, let us *pray most earnestly* in those awful moments, when some unlooked for experience of life does for you as the tempter has made it do for almost every other Christian who ever lived, — makes you for the moment believe that the heavens are brass, and the earth iron, and God as indifferent as Baal to the Prophets on the sides of Carmel, — I say *pray then!*

AUGUST TWENTY-SIXTH

It may be your duty and mine to go to the House of God, and even to the Holy Communion, when our feeling is far from a condition which turns worship into exultant praise, but rather keeps it on that lower note of earnest, almost pitiable, prayer.

AUGUST TWENTY-SEVENTH

I was twenty-five years in the ministry, during which I honestly thought that the sentence, "The Lord is in His holy Temple, let all the earth keep silence," meant that we should all be dumb, although the whole purpose was an hour and a half of common praise, before I thought to look and find from the context that

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the Prophet is finding fault with our everlasting doubt and criticism of the Almighty; and that *that* was to be hushed, and give place to praise and prayer!

AUGUST TWENTY-EIGHTH

In looking back over the years, many indeed are the ruinous mistakes of over-zeal! But how about those of no zeal at all? Is it nothing to you whether men are lost? "But I do not know what to say," says one. Two agencies are good teachers, one to drive forward, the other to restrain. One is *honest conviction, belief in one's own heart* — that to drive on. The restraint is simply that of good breeding, united to a little bit of sanctified common-sense.

AUGUST TWENTY-NINTH

Life estimated by discontent may be a desert: life measured by gratitude may be a garden.

AUGUST THIRTIETH

How about courage in the home? It is a hard place to be brave, because trying to be brave at home gives the devil a chance to make us rude, and Christ doesn't want you to be rude.

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But He does want you to be honest, and there is not much honesty without somewhere a good deal of moral courage.

AUGUST THIRTY-FIRST

“A man after God’s own heart.” That David was not always such we know only too well. Vice keeps us reminded for its own sake of Uriah’s wife: cruelty recalls with some comfort his command about Joab: negligent and unwise parents speak in rather pitying tones of his neglect of his numerous family while they were growing up, and his weakness over a rascally bad son when he was grown. But that old-time chronicler, whoever he was, has made us feel at least one place where David *was* a man after God’s heart. Why? For one simple reason, he had courage to do exactly what he was told, and to do it then: because then was when it was wanted.

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER FIRST

The whole world's challenge runs, "Give me a man that we may fight": and the answer comes quiet, clear, true, "Be of good courage. *I have overcome the world.*"

SEPTEMBER SECOND

"In My Father's house are many mansions." Beyond all question the Lord meant to hold out to His people, as the highest hope and richest incentive, the thought of a home hereafter in God's holy house, and in His presence where law and love and rule would be one common and instinctive thought, and holy impulse: but I believe as surely He meant us to remember that in travelling upwards toward that ideal, there were many God-given places, where we must stop to gain strength, levels where having risen we may claim we are in God's house. But we are to take warning that we do not stop there! One meaning of the word translated 'mansions' is an inn on the line of an unfinished journey. They are resting places, but the

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journey is not done. In God's name I beg you not to turn your place of rest into one of guilty, possibly fatal, sleep. In the Father's house are many resting places, but they may not be made tarrying places.

SEPTEMBER THIRD

Cheerfulness makes many a man and woman welcome at many a house. You use it to help yourself. All I ask is, do you use it to help Christ? There are men and women whose whole life is simply to trifle: their very laughter is the rattle of a fool's cap and bells. But when Paul and Silas sang hymns in prison there was an earthquake, and I expect there would be another if some of our Christians were to become cheerful. But cheerfulness does not always need a laugh — it is like the silence of courage, often most potent when it is mute, and its witness most unmistakable where the sweetest smile is set round with sorrow too deep to allow it to smooth away the else deep wrinkles of God's stricken child.

SEPTEMBER FOURTH

The more I read, the less able I am to draw lines where Christ intended to, or actually

SEPTEMBER

attempted to, make much difference in His missionary work. A sinning human being, or a suffering one, the nearest to His hand and His feet was the best subject for His thought and help, and was nearest to His heart.

We look in Scripture to find the date and incident which opened the work of foreign missions, but is this not easy? If St. Peter's message to Cornelius be one, there are others which may be recalled; and may we not count among them this incident of the Woman of Samaria, and is this not the first attempt of Christian foreign mission? Christ says salvation is of the Jews, but the men of Samaria are the first to own Him the Saviour of the whole world.

SEPTEMBER FIFTH

Men tell us, "We don't want your church and its rules. I have my own way of doing: I am a little peculiar." Oh dear! How tired the Lord must be of hearing all of us common-place folk boasting of peculiarity. I doubt if there is enough peculiarity in a dozen Sunday gatherings, or two dozen week-day ones to make up what would pass for one respectable "peculiar"

SEPTEMBER

character if tried under the Lord's eye. It is the same old self-will, just as new as when Eve took that fruit.

SEPTEMBER SIXTH

Men are often driven to rebuke failure in their boy, or to face dishonesty in their clerk. Unless you are a very hypocrite, in which case your teaching will accomplish little, and just as you are honest yourself, every effort to teach better things, teaches you better things. You may be sowing good seed in your child's mind: already there is a crop in your own, if you are to do any good. There never was a kind act in any life, nor an honest, wise or right one, which did not have its prompt crop reaped by the doer before it helped anyone else.

SEPTEMBER SEVENTH

There comes the question, "Why is not more gain showed? Why is not more of the world's sin taken away?" And the truest answer I know is that those of us who are most beholden to Christ for His taking away our sin are so very slow to help Him do just that for others!

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER EIGHTH

I know no way of speaking to people who do not know the good side of fear. It is to people who are afraid of life's dangers and life's risks, and yet most afraid of letting these make cowards of them, — it is to these that I am speaking. I do not wish them to belittle for a moment the awful risks of Christian life: nor do I want them to let these risks paralyze effort. Said a highly gifted man, "I cannot go into the detail of life; the *reality* of life shocks me. I must keep out." And he did: he died shut away, helpless, paralyzed, a trembling old man whose body was the exact sacrament of his spirit. But others had failed: therefore he dared not try.

SEPTEMBER NINTH

Jesus Christ could not stay up in heaven, and tell us all what to do. All the messages of angels told in Scripture cannot be to us what Jesus and His Cross are. When you can tell me why He could not teach us as well from His throne as from His Cross, I will tell you why we can not do as well without sacraments as with them.

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER TENTH

Failure of God's men in worship *harms* others. Even bad men grieve when a good man has been guilty of folly.

SEPTEMBER ELEVENTH

Men cry, "Give us novelty!" and strangely enough they seek it in vice. Let them try one hour of purity and truth, they will know what the Scriptures mean by the "newness of life."

SEPTEMBER TWELFTH

Meet all your life calls of work and sorrow, and grief for sin against God in His grace and strength, with determined, earnest self-control. But in all your work and sorrow, in all your fight against evil, let the light of His love show through all that you are and do. Be glad witnesses of His glad news. Let your life show that you bear "good news," of sure triumph to come, and not a message of despair.

SEPTEMBER THIRTEENTH

The attitude of reception is the ideal of worship, whether in a house, stately and beautiful

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in skill of building, resounding with all possible skill of sanctified art to aid reverence: or whether it be the stammering speech of a rude, humble soul kneeling in honest prayer, perhaps in a secluded spot of Nature's mighty Church, her forest his growing temple, her strange medley of sound and song his God-given choir.

SEPTEMBER FOURTEENTH

I know people who are perfectly willing to *send* every man who wants to go over across Jordan to fight for God's coming history, but they can't see that *they* have anything to do with it.

SEPTEMBER FIFTEENTH

The whole background of any prayer at all is that we are moving with, not against, the will of the Almighty. We pray to Him, not because we do not mean to do our part, but because we *would* do it. We are at work, a tiny creature, amidst a great mass of machinery far beyond our control: but we learn as best we can the conditions of life, and as best we can adjust ourselves thereto. And then we pray.

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER SIXTEENTH

On *what* do we ask God's blessing? Is it something in which we would care to ask the Almighty to become a partner? It is a high privilege to pray to "Our Father, Which Art in Heaven," and it is a privilege to ask Him to "give us this day our daily bread," and it may be a privilege to remember that, if He answer, it will be through just the work which we and He are doing together.

SEPTEMBER SEVENTEENTH

Who gives this "daily bread?" Men say it is self-deception, and yet it has run through nineteen centuries: imagination, and it has stood every test of reality to which life can subject it: it meets and answers the conscience accused of wrong-doing, sustains the heart-demand in moments of every possible kind of trial, enables men who else were quick to harm to forget and forgive, widens men's capacities for affection, makes them better husbands, brothers, friends, citizens and men. Yet it is something which money has failed to buy, however large the offer, whether poured into

SEPTEMBER

priests' hands or church treasuries: philosophy has alternately assailed and patronized it: but when philosophy attempts its office, it fails utterly to do its work. It turns endurance into patience, life into energy, and death into hope.

SEPTEMBER EIGHTEENTH

Perhaps the woman of Samaria described her own life when she said, "The well is deep, and you have nothing wherewith to draw." But it was just this human well which He measured, and from which He drank. Where an ordinary knowledge of human nature could not reach, He could and did: and finding an honest longing in a human soul, He was willing to stop and try further to change her life. Mere regret for the mistake of her folly would not have held His interest. But how far off the Father could see the prodigal coming, and how far down the Christ can look and see in a human heart its better motive, you and I cannot know.

SEPTEMBER NINETEENTH

Discontent may be an impulse of evil, and may be a gift divine. Delve as you will in the

SEPTEMBER

much of evil, search amid the amusement-life of vulgar or refined art, seek as you will in the love of the purest friend God ever gave, closest though this is to God and His life, yet not there may you stop: for never will that discontent God placed within you be answered, or its demands fulfilled, until God carries within you the fountain of life eternal.

SEPTEMBER TWENTIETH

Our love alone satisfies Christ: why should aught but HIS satisfy us?

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

St. Luke starts from the very nursery, with the beautiful light over the hill of Bethlehem: St. Mark often arrests with his life-like stories, as he tells what St. Peter, eye-witness of the Lord, reported: St. John is the often needed companion as Christian fervor rises in some glad meeting of praise; or comforts in the deeper trials of life-sorrow. But after all, for the unpoetic, every-day, constant wear, it may be well doubted if any one of the four serves quite like this business man, St. Matthew's, plain, steady record of the Life Divine among men!

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SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

Martha's hint would almost read, "Master, your promise is small comfort. Away off in the unknown future may rise the mountain of hope lighted with the glory of God, and filled rank on rank with the risen people of our Maker, saints of every age to sing His praise. But to me the one stubborn, all-consuming fact is that my brother *is dead*." Then the mighty words, first spoken in the ears of a living being. "I am the resurrection and the life." And it is too much for her. She does not know what this teaching is. But she knows who this *Teacher* is, "Thou art the Christ": she can believe in *Him*. She does not ask for an explanation why suffering and death are permitted in the world. She does not ask for a description of the blessed dead when they are gone, or whether we will know one another in that Land of Light. She concentrates her whole religious power and her entire religious life in the Lord and Saviour. Everything gathers to Him; she knew his life and His power, and she felt His presence. But *we* know His death and mighty resurrection, His death bringing Him a step closer to our

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human life, if His resurrection lifts Him far away to the level of the majesty of the life of our God.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

The speechless cry of an overburdened spirit, wearied with the trials of life, or borne down with the struggle against sin, has still the Friend of all friends to plead with the Almighty Father, in the gracious Saviour's Name, and ask help for which we can cry, but which we cannot describe. "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us."

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

Dignity which must be always defended had better be entirely disposed of, or rather doesn't exist: it is very often a very thin disguise for a bad temper. I have seen clever young people made almost worthless for life because their parents taught them that a bad temper was a very dignified piece of peculiarity. Strife is as old as the Tower of Babel, and as common as the row which broke up that pretentious building. But if you want a peculiarity which stands out above all surroundings, take that friendship

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between David and Jonathan, where each was too grand to suspect a fault or failure in the other, and which held through all the dangers of open war!

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

The man great enough to fling down his weapons, and trust without a doubt his great Friend was he who, armed as God armed him, and sure in God's great promised defence, stood between two threatening armies while others cowered in their tents. The man who is confident he is right in God's sight, who feels his security in God's favor, can afford to allow his dignity to take care of itself.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

There are people in the world whose chief purpose, one is disposed to think, is with their own rough surfaces to rub smooth those who are next to them. The world has never thought it worth while to call attention to any piece of ill-humor as especially wonderful; but it bows to-day in adoration over the prayer, "Father, forgive them." And that rises so high in its solitude that only those most like Him in life

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ever approached His eminence. One other prayed, "Lay not this sin to their charge": and the world leaves Master and disciple almost unapproached in their splendid peculiarity of life and death.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

There is nothing peculiar in battle-fields strewn with men made in God's image, some broken, some bleeding, some dying with blasphemy on their lips, some dead with the clutch of hate on their hands, and its scowl on their marble face. There is nothing peculiar in sacked cities, and homeless women and fatherless children. Plunder is as old as the days of Abraham, and murder is only just not as old as the race. Individuality enters only where a gleam of the Christ-spirit shoots across the waste! In the Civil War a dying man looked up and asked an officer of the enemy to kneel and pray God for Christ's sake to receive his soul; and amid the turmoil of retreat and advance the prayer was made, and the man slept his sleep: but countless other men made only common blocks in the sad mosaic. Nobody wondered at them; but this one was a manly soul, serving God. Where-

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ever this is, we find a man preserving his individuality; and of course his manliness.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

I know very well that when servants take places, they must expect servants' work. But if you will look closely you will find that your religion must be one which will reach as far as your treatment of those under you. After all, the hardest gauge of one's religion is the estimate of the one next to us. But suppose Christ should measure by that! "Oh! that is sentimentalism!" Well, I do not think I ever traced a Christian precept quite down to anybody's door that the person inside did not call it sentimentalism.

SEPTEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

One of these is intended to be put at the street corner, on a sign, "Take heed that ye do not your righteousness to be seen of men": and the other is to be written on the walls of your own selfishness and hiding homes, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." And one is as much the

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command of Christ as the other. And both are intended to rebuke the same fault of *hypocrisy*—one is the hypocrisy of exposure and exhibition, and the other the hypocrisy of concealment and hiding plain duty. Read the last verse this way, “Let your light so shine that it may fall on your works, and men may see them, and not you: and also that men may assign all the glory to God and not to you.”

SEPTEMBER THIRTIETH

Only the object of faith can make faith. Only he whom you trust can make you trust, and keep you trusting him. If we have any faith in God it is the gift of God. He, His Son and His Spirit make us trust; unless the devil or man has lied about Him, and we have listened.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER FIRST

For Christ's sweet sake, come give us that argument against which the cleverest skeptic is silent — a life led under the light of Christ!

OCTOBER SECOND

The Bible is nowhere more true than where it teaches that persistent doubt is as distinct a *hindrance* to the Almighty as indulgence.

OCTOBER THIRD

So unseen, yet forever at hand, no partner with sin, no belittler of wrong, no companion of neglect, no admirer of self-will; nay, but the very Hero of the crucifixion of self, He is in and near each home, each toiling, patient, right-minded man, and diligent woman.

OCTOBER FOURTH

"Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away." That petition was not granted. There was the instinct of prayer, there was the impul-

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sive seeking for protection from that enormous Power above, which was leading the steps of that same praying Man. But your salvation and mine depended upon God's not granting that one petition. But He answered that prayer. Do you pretend for one moment that the Christ took nothing by His prayer?

Could you or I ask any higher privilege, dare we expect any greater evidence of sonship, than that we should pray with Christ, and with Christ be blessed?

OCTOBER FIFTH

The glory of God is a man free to know and do what is right.

Right is too often left to the frail exaction of a social demand.

The enduring element of which the Temple of God must be built is simply and only one thing, and that is RIGHT. It is not faith, it is not hope, it is not love; and it is all three: but it is *right*. And more than that, it is not what you and I may think is right. It is not even the best that we can do. The thing that is to last, the thing that is built within the foundation and walls of this Temple is RIGHT

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as it stands in the sight, and dwells in the soul, of God.

OCTOBER SIXTH

“How much prayer, and how often?” As often as your words will carry an aspiration after God’s life and rule and reign. And when the heart is cold and there is no aspiration? Kneel in silence till God’s Spirit tells you that Christ came not to give rules for prayer, but to lead the outcast and humble, and the industrious man and busy woman, and the rich merchant, and the reserved noble — *all* upwards toward God; and till you learn that if we could have prayer at will, and at our own bidding, He had never left high Heaven and come to earth!

OCTOBER SEVENTH

The world by human wisdom could never find God, and He had to be revealed. The world by human wisdom would never follow God, but the power of the Holy Ghost through the wisdom and understanding of consecrated men and women of every age has been spreading the ideal reign of the ideal King. From the great heads of the Church of God, and the great

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Christian men who occupy high places in the realms of the world, on down to the humblest teacher in Sunday or day-school, or the most patient companion in social or home life, the instrument which God's kingdom needs, and the blessing for which your Church so wisely prays, is the patient reading of God's truth, and patient thought on God's message under the power of the Spirit of wisdom and understanding.

OCTOBER EIGHTH

He made forgiveness the very inbreathed life of the Church. The parable does not say to collect no debts, and does not say that you must be able to forgive as God does. It says you must have a forgiving heart, which Christ will give you, provided you will take it and use it, provided you will *receive* His forgiveness. For with that will go, not the clutch upon another's throat and brutal imprisonment of him, but right Christian *pity*. Let *us* go back, then, to the prayer each debtor cries, "Have patience with *me*."

OCTOBER NINTH

Oh! the possibility of a human being to fling upon human life a light which should expose

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the false and show the true; which would terrorize with denunciation, and yet attract with the perfection of love; which could denounce a punishment which staggers human belief, and yet offer a reward which is too much for human hope, as did the Life of all lives, the Shelter of all shelters, whose constant life was one of denial of self and ease, and whose last tremendous appeal alike to God and man was His death on Calvary. The ideal Man, the ideal Teacher, the ideal Sufferer, the ideal Shelter! Who comes to Him and asks forgiveness, may have it when he is willing to learn and follow Him. And the closer he lives to his Lord, the more he will rule in love those who are in the power of his love and rule in justice those in his power of place. His own life will rebuke what is false, and plead for what is true: he will be to his brother what His Lord is to him, "The Shadow of a great Rock in a weary land."

OCTOBER TENTH

Love is one of the best discoverers of what one is. It is the quickest, keenest and deepest sight we can have turned in upon us. There is nothing like pure, strong love to see what is in

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us, of right and of wrong, of need for rebuke and for help. Nothing like love teaches that. Quick love, emotional love, may be feelingly blind to the first of its objects; but careful love is the closest student, and is in the quickest position to diagnose a failure, and suggest treatment. And by His love, the Christ who loved me has found a failure in me, in each of us, as He always will. He looks, He hears, He stoops with all His perfected human sympathy to know our need, then turns to the exhaustless treasure of Divine Wisdom to know our remedy.

OCTOBER ELEVENTH

I know there has been many a bit of hidden giving, and God has lost no glory. I have naught to say of giving for God and Christ; He will surely find it, and men will see and give glory. But alas for the wild talk against loud, blatant, street-corner hypocrisy, which in one man's mouth is to excuse himself from public worship, and in another's to keep his too well-loved dollars.

OCTOBER TWELFTH

If there is no Christ here to meet, if there is no word from God in this Bible, if there is no

OCTOBER

Lord in the sacrament, if there is no Spirit to come in answer to an humble prayer, if the whole thing is a human device to be "seen of men," then by all means have nothing to do with us, and shun us as a thing to be hated of God and despised of men, for it is a cheat, and that alone! But if Christ lives, and loves us; if He has put within us faith growing into trust, and hope growing into love, then by all means come to the house of God, and help bring the blessing which Christ promised to united prayer.

OCTOBER THIRTEENTH

I doubt if there is a bigger lie in Satan's repertoire than the claim that men do not feel their sin against God. They may not feel it as they ought; but men and women always in quiet hours admit responsibility to God, if they believe at all. But if we measured more God's pitying, saving love in Christ, then we would measure more our injury done Him through ingratitude, and we would see more clearly what an enormous power there is to bring life and growth into our lives, endless, exhaustless power to do whatever He asks.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER FOURTEENTH

Any number of people are willing to believe themselves agents of Providence provided they are winning! Men leading successful armies will be very careful to allow the Almighty a share in their actions. The trouble is to get the acknowledgment of Providence when we are losing!

OCTOBER FIFTEENTH

I do not deny the summons to faith of such a mighty truth, I do not deny its tax, nay, its very burden. But this I say, shut out the Christ and there is no light in the world. "While I am in the world, I am the *light* of the world."

OCTOBER SIXTEENTH

Among beautiful hills one day we rode beside a clear, laughing stream, running richer and richer for a while: and then under shaded rocks it dwindled, lessened, and was gone; for the great, hard earth had swallowed it from our sight. And then we rode over the hills, and lo! beyond on the farther side we found a broad, deep river swelling and flowing beneath the

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gladdest of sunlight. Who can deny that the glad stream of life grows sluggish, and is at last swallowed up beneath the weary hills of death's wide domain, and through its gloomy hills runs the dark valley of its shadow? And only one great Teacher comes to tell us that beyond there the lost stream bursts in a glory of power, and very gladness of light and life never lost again!

OCTOBER SEVENTEENTH

Men talk of the intricate paths of life, and they are many. And none are more so than those which wind about in the four walls of the house in which you live. And if you would walk them doing kindly service, and avoiding weak concessions to wrong on one hand, and harsh exactions of right on the other, then let in the blessed Christ into that home. You may give a wide berth to that harsh-tempered one in your home who is so exacting: but do you let the Christ tread the narrower way of kindliness and love?



OCTOBER EIGHTEENTH

Paul, now the aged, is shut up in Caesar's prison, with not much longer to live, and he is

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writing to his son Timothy at Ephesus. "Only Luke is with me." So has said many a man and woman, shut in some prison of old age or feeble health, shut up in some small moment of life and its trial. Luke at least is with me. Something is left of Luke's strange, beautiful story of the little Child of Bethlehem, and the angels; and the song of the shepherds survives, and their strange report, learned long ago in home and nursery. Somehow God has given them the chance to sit with Luke awhile, and learn his fascinating stories of the human life of Him of Nazareth, which sank deep down in memory, when memory was in the soft, impressive state, where the characters once sunk never have quite gone out. And so when the hard knocks of life have beaten away much which we thought would never be gone, the tempted, tried and grieved heart thanks God that at least Luke with his strange, staying story is "with me."

OCTOBER NINETEENTH

Debate as you will what you call the philosophy of the Atonement, one fact obscures with its light all others — Jesus of Nazareth has alone of all men been able to forgive. And the

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glory of His religion is that He is able to forgive, and to rule by forgiving. Men believed then and men believe now that Jesus can and does forgive. The Magdalen, the maniac, Peter, Paul — what an endless host have shouted their praise to God, sure that this Man has forgiven!

OCTOBER TWENTIETH

Three kinds of people have self at the centre. Your hurrying, fussy little people seek the crowd because it is a crowd, and they want to be amused: these are rather light people, without reserve force, with nothing to turn to, who are miserable when threatened with an hour by themselves; they have found that about the worst company in the world is themselves, and a good many people agree with them.

Then there are cool, solitary characters who keep solitary because they wish to be comfortable in work or indulgence, and do not want to be disturbed. These are often strong people and useful people. They are big enough to get above the masses, and not quite big enough to come back to them again.

Then some persons of position carefully avoid "society people," and look for people a little lower

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down, because these gratify their vanity, and yet are dreadfully hard on people who toady to wealth. I know no more subtle vanity, nor any weaker, than that which avoids people of position because it finds it more gratifying to gather about it persons to whom it is easily superior.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIRST

The exclamation comes instinctively, "Why we must select friends, we can't all go together, men will divide." Yes, I know: Herodias and Judas and all who said, "Give us Barabas," went with the crowd, and they had plenty of company; it is easy to go with the crowd. The pulpit always pleads against going with the crowd. And yet remember, Jesus of Nazareth went with the crowd as well. John the Baptist in his severe honesty and purity avoided men and sought the wilderness: Jesus of Nazareth sought men and avoided the wilderness. "I must go to the villages, go among the people, live there while I can, for therefore am I sent." He is perhaps the only Man who mingled among men, simply from a sense of duty; did not seek them for amusement, or flattery or gain, but

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recognized the fact that He was here among men, with a sense of obligation to do them good.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SECOND

Christ's world ever widens in breadth and space and time, and yours and mine does not. We weary a bit over it; I don't care who we are, life grows trying. And it is because our lives cross so many others. Bad enough if we cross a stranger line, still worse if it be one nearer home. The truer the man, the more he grieves at these battle-places. Do you not see that earth might be Heaven if only we had Christ's wide and ever-widening love? Conflict is too often the world's gift to the proud claimant of the right to say who he will or will not have in his world.

OCTOBER TWENTY-THIRD

Often we want advice, or help, or influence or someone to plead for us. How many go through life never needing and never asking such? Not many. Everywhere men and women, boys and girls, are looking for these natural priests, people made by nature fit to advise, and able to plead.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER TWENTY-FOURTH

The person most "in your power" is the person who cares most for you.

OCTOBER TWENTY-FIFTH

Most of us think of sorrow as the root idea of repentance: it is not; hope is. Where sorrow is the root idea there is blank, horrid, hopeless remorse. St. Peter wept enough, but it was because he had wounded a kind friend. Judas wept none at all, but the fires burned out his soul in grief hopeless and despairing; he could see only an enemy.

OCTOBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Inspiration is one thing: revelation is another. God's revelation in Christ was direct. The inspiration of its recording was given to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Men do not have to be electricians to see by the light, and men need not know the mysteries of Inspiration before they can see by God's truth, if they will.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

Many are willing to have the Almighty God over them, provided He holds Himself ready to work miracles which will save them trouble; but *not* if His miracles exact trouble.

OCTOBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

Any amount of people will believe that the Ruler of the universe has something to do with an earthquake or a volcano: it is hard for us to believe that He controls the bloom of a peach-tree, or the recovery of a little child.

OCTOBER TWENTY-NINTH

God will judge the world in righteousness: not in whim, not in jealousy, but in RIGHT-EOUSNESS. And by whom? By the men about you in your life? No! By that Man whom He has appointed. Not one of your miserable, little bits of people who will come and lay a microscope down to see some spot on you, which by some marvel they have not on them; but judgment by this great big, broad, loving, pure, gentle, blessed Man!

OCTOBER

OCTOBER THIRTIETH

Of all things needed in this world, it is for big, broad men, men who have not failed, to be our triers. Put me before some little man, one who has succeeded in one way and failed in a great many, who has some one virtue and many faults, and how he will scrutinize, and how merciless he will be! And then find some great-hearted man, who has by God's grace conquered most of his own vices and he will be the gentlest judge!

OCTOBER THIRTY-FIRST

Oh, what is a holy, loving Christian life in its personal touch upon those near it *not* worth, in this great world where at last the strongest power is that of Christ, and the most lasting life is His undying love!

Believe me, some soul waits to greet you, who will thank God for Christ's coming, and for YOURS.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER FIRST

When we start with All Saints' Day we rush at once to the "Communion of Saints," and the heart will have this thought.

If there is any truth to me *real* it is that while their knowledge of life here can never destroy the glad life of those who have gone before, yet beyond all question if love here be love there, then not one trial here ever escapes the pitying sympathy of any who are allowed to know the trials of their loved ones; and over nothing do they yearn more to tell us their triumph than when they see death's sad presence.

Each believer only makes one more in the family of God; but the family is complete only with that one, and it may be you or me.

NOVEMBER SECOND

Not a man has ever lived who honestly gave his allegiance to Christ and wrought for Him, from whose life the Lord has not taken the good and given it to the Church at large.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER THIRD

A great, strong man on a throne, or behind an army, or behind a huge fortune, who simply tries to make all men let him go ahead while he makes them stand still, is an enemy; and we rightly enough treat him as such. And the entire question of government among us is to know where that line runs which, while protecting the weak, leaves the strong, to rush on and carry the great country with them.

NOVEMBER FOURTH

When God's great Providence forces the fighting, by ordering or permitting some great loss, then depend upon it, it is because you and I have some weak point, which, unless exposed by assault, we would never admit is there.

NOVEMBER FIFTH

Consciousness and conscience make men what they are. Many a field has been dark with blood to gain for men the noblest right of man, the right to seek and find and follow right, as his Maker shows it.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER SIXTH

Religion is the attitude of the mind toward God. But that is only the reflex of His mind upon us. As He is to us, so at best we are to Him. We love Him, but only because He loved us. We serve Him, but He serves us first. We may praise Him, but it can only be when He has glorified us here or hereafter. The stream can give the ocean only what, through the clouds, the ocean has sent to the stream; and the stream feeds only as it has been fed.

NOVEMBER SEVENTH

I think if I were driven to say just what the hidden manna was, I should say it was the full consciousness of the forgiveness of sins.

NOVEMBER EIGHTH

The size of my income, my place in society, the condition of those I love, and my own battle with temptation, — these make up my daily need for which I ask food. And these are not a philosophical speculation about God's providence, but a daily reality to every man

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and woman on this earth, differing only in extent, never in kind.

NOVEMBER NINTH

God is omnipotent, but to make me love Him by sheer decree of power is beyond omnipotence; He must lure me by undoubted and indomitable love.

NOVEMBER TENTH

There is nothing for which the world clamors more than a religion for every day. Jesus answers, "The simplest, first prayer I ever gave was that." And you say it in your grandest worship, and your child lisps it as you teach his sleepy little lips to repeat it, "Give us this day our *daily* bread." It is just this which makes it a prayer for us each and all. The cross is daily, but the faith and the food are daily too.

NOVEMBER ELEVENTH

Over and over we find the gifts of God so wonderfully abundant, and the trouble all is that we have no receivers. And there is only one thing to do. Go to someone out of yourself, maybe some neighbor dead two thousand years ago and living only in some book he wrote,

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but he is your neighbor, go borrow a receiver from him. Or it may be, someone who fought out the life-battle in a quiet circle, and in God's providence preserved in some little story of courage and faith and hope, and there possibly in a child's biography, he is a neighbor — go, he will lend you a bigger thought, or a deeper purpose and will, or a wider, warmer heart, to catch and hold God's ready gifts of grace. There is never any trouble about the supply; but often we have nothing to hold it.

NOVEMBER TWELFTH

The office of God's Spirit may be easily mistaken. It is true that the Spirit may act upon men by direct influence, so that in providence and grace God may directly guide: I should be slow to deny that. But that is not His rule: His usual mode of action is to use information stored in memory, and passed through the reason, and by the Spirit's influence, put into the heart and life.

NOVEMBER THIRTEENTH

I think we sometimes read that old story of Adam and Eve as if we thought the great lov-

NOVEMBER

ing God stood by in human form, rejoicing over the scene as Adam and Eve went out by their own act from the garden into the sorrow and trial of the world where now we live. Depend upon it, the Father saw them go with the same deep heartache with which Jesus in that night received the kiss of Judas, no more, no less.

NOVEMBER FOURTEENTH

The dear Lord Himself echoes the words, "See thou to that." Christ comes nearer than any other, but He leaves you that sentence. He is nearer to sinful men than any other can be, nearer the Magdalen as she touched His feet, nearer the thief with whom, and for whom, He died. And He comes to you, He bears your griefs, as only love can lift them, He carried your sins, as only purity, love and power divine can carry. He reaches out His hand, and you may put yours in it, — but, "See thou to that."

NOVEMBER FIFTEENTH

It may fairly be doubted if there is a single sentence in all the knowledge of this world like this one, "Our Father, who art in heaven," older than earth and as new as the face and

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heart of the little child to whom you teach it. Everywhere over this broad earth angel messengers wait to bear children's and adults' prayers above, and never one loses sight of another as from worshipper to worshipper they move, while the sun brings round the hour for evening prayer, and these words bear our petition, from hamlet and cottage, from city and wilderness, aye, upon the great wide seas, men and women and children kneel and say, as Christ taught, "Our Father."

NOVEMBER SIXTEENTH

But men like this truth of the Fatherhood of God, because they think it is so tolerant and patient and forbearing. So it is on one side. But do you know anything so intolerant, and at times impatient, as a father's love? Will he stand patiently by, and see someone take what is his? Will he hear patiently and without remonstrance the suspicion cast by his son upon his kindness and gentleness and love? Hardly. And when men ask me if, after all, it makes any difference as to what views they hold of the Divine Nature, provided they are honest, I must answer that it depends entirely

NOVEMBER

upon whether Christ was right in saying the oldest of truths is that God is Father: and if He is, it makes a world of difference what we think of Him.

NOVEMBER SEVENTEENTH

The wound of love is the secret of sin. Wound your child, and you sin against him: wound your wife, and you sin against her: wound a parent, and you sin against him: wound God, and you sin. Say one moment, "Our Father" and then spend a life careless of who or what He is, and you have awaked all that is justly "jealous" in that Father. Could He be a Father, and not be so? Because He *is* a Father, man's offence is sin.

NOVEMBER EIGHTEENTH

The forming of idle dreams which are kept for a moment and then gone forever has ruined many a life. The calling up of the possibilities of life, the gathering of good intentions to be laid away and never dreamed of afterwards, pious dreams and better thoughts, — these float away, and we are worse, because weaker. Catch it! Put it in form! Give the thought of obe-

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dience the form of obedience, give the dream of humility the form of humility. God wants no dreamy worship, no sublime ideals, which you know, and He knows, will amount to nothing. Embody your thought of lowly reverence in an act showing obedience, and then it will be worship!

NOVEMBER NINETEENTH

With some of us the religion of Jesus is a pregnant subject for philosophical discussion, with others for speculation, with others a strange jewel of thought preserved and delivered by tradition, with others an inheritance from the fathers, with others an aid to civilization, and a possible help to government, with others an incident to polite, well-bred life, with some an occasion for loathsome hypocrisy, and with how many the effort of the great God of Heaven to restore His wandering children to a service of love and truth and enduring life!

NOVEMBER TWENTIETH

I thank God that long ago I learned that no miracle, not even Christ's own Resurrection, is great compared to the enormous measure of

NOVEMBER

power which lies back of and around and behind it all.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

I have sometimes thought, as I have watched homes blessed of God, that I found the highest happiness and the truest children where love and law were so well poised that the parents were the trusted, easy companions of their children, where association sometimes ran out to almost romp in its safe companionship, and the lessons of honor and love were so well taught that respect grew with the play of this familiar affection, and love grew with this assured respect. Believe me, nothing makes your homes so beautiful as this well-balanced companionship of father and mother and child.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

A strange company gathered into Pilate's court. Some were slaves to love of place and power, some to wealth, some to hate and anger, some to fear. One alone was free: He was their prisoner. They thought they were trying the Lord, but the whole world knows the Lord was trying them.

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NOVEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

I am far from denying that men read a good deal now; that the range of intelligence is above the average of days gone by, I admit, if you like. All I say is, there is a danger of losing interest or any desire to build up on what they read.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

I pray God I am not to live to see the day when, if God's Providence place before me a Spirit-taught man, I shall doubt how and by whom his word was learned, and through whose heart the stream of God's grace flowed into his own. I do not believe God's Spirit allows a human counterfeit, and a Christian man is God-made, be the human instrument what it may.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

Our language is often much more loyal than our hearts.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

We see God's care moving around us day by day without knowing it; but at times for our help God writes it in plain words over the life

NOVEMBER

of some man or woman, who has by no means been kept from trial, with whom the world has by no means always gone smoothly, but to whom, somehow, the grace of God has come once for all, bringing a faith that never fails. It takes hold of the mind, and becomes its faithful servant to seek, to learn and to hold the mystery of God's love as it is told in the life of Jesus Christ, and the wonder of His power in the Resurrection: and it takes hold of the heart, and each after experience only drills the saint into a stronger faith, never abandoned to complaint, though there may come a whisper of wonder how there can come so much sorrow in the midst of so much love.

NOVEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

Men have by clear faith beheld Christ's cross till they have been pure. Men have, by study of men's lives, and by measure of Calvary's awful story, learned the deep possibilities of life, its chances and changes, its hopes and defeats, its ruins and its triumphs, till fairly burdened under the opportunities of this life they have pleaded and warned, and men have listened. Few of them, if you like, but they are here.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER TWENTY-EIGHTH

St. John was far outside the spirit of his Master, and made a very sad mistake, when he wanted fire from heaven to destroy his Lord's enemies. But what would the Church have been if he had had no more fire from heaven than too many of us cautious Christians rejoice in! What is wanted among us is not only a little more, but a great deal more fire from heaven: and we need to use it too!

NOVEMBER TWENTY-NINTH

The Atonement is done, the great trumpet sounds and bids me rise to a new life. So Christ called Zaccheus with his love of money, and called the beggar Bartimeus, called Matthew from the receipt of custom, and the maniac from the tombs, called the sisters of Lazarus, and the poor soul over whom men stood ready with stones to take her life — called all to forgiveness, and to something else: called all to another great chance to take and hold from God the sacred trust of a human life.

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER THIRTIETH

Paul knew his own life too well to ask people never to get angry. He and St. Peter had it out, even the gentle and good Barnabas and he had it out: but he evidently thought that people might find that what pride calls sometimes "righteous indignation," the indwelling Guest might know to be something else. He thought one might be angry and sin not, provided only he took care of the tongue; if he only could stop that! How many bitter things we have said that we need not have said, how many hasty things, which we call a "piece of our mind," and which we wish might be blotted out of God's own memory: how home might have been saved, and friendship might have gone on, if only one stinging word had been kept back!

DECEMBER

DECEMBER FIRST

Struggle against evil I must, but not because God is not here, but because He is ever *coming*, — coming in pity, coming in love, coming ever in the sympathy of the Nazarene's life, coming in the resistless majesty of the forgiveness of the Nazarene's death, coming ever in the power of Christ, and His Resurrection, till man and God meet where the angels of light are the choir around the throne of God.

DECEMBER SECOND

May God in infinite goodness keep alive in our hearts the privilege of worship, by keeping ever within our souls the conviction that He is ever *coming* to meet with us!

DECEMBER THIRD

Christ never has but one text for sermons on His second coming. It is not the numbers and name in Revelation, trying to drag out the secret of God, nor is it an attempt to find a name in history which would let us have a hint

DECEMBER

of when the Advent would be. It is always one thing, to make His people "watch" — this is His text. As a porter is diligent expecting the house-lord, as a bridal company await the bride-groom, as a householder awaits a coming thief, evening, morning, midnight, cock-crowing, each may be the time. Watch!

DECEMBER FOURTH

"See thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done." If your way is not there, then I do not speak to you. But this I ask: let God and conscience hold high court, and answer there, has never claim of self-indulgence ruled you? Has no claim of amusement dragged you from known duty to God on high? Has no craving ever kept you from Christian duty clear beyond mistaking? Then strange indeed must be your life! The grim walls of the Holy City may look dark and forbidding: they did then. The groves of Hinnom are fair and inviting: they were then. Now you and your Maker look down from the wall of His holy place, and tell Him, "Is thy way not there in that valley?"

DECEMBER

DECEMBER FIFTH

I walked one night the deck of a vessel, and as we talked, someone said, "Only a night more till we shall sleep securely in our homes." An officer said, "I feel more secure here: there is always someone on watch!" Yes, there was Someone on watch when the little boat labored in the waves of Galilee, and over them came the Watcher, and said, "Peace! It is I." Jesus, Deliverer! Come Thou to me, soothe my voyaging over life's sea! Thou, when the storm of death roars sweeping by, whisper, Oh! Truth of truth! "Peace! It is I!"

DECEMBER SIXTH

The Baptist could warn and preach, and then he was done. He must send men to Christ, or else fail his office: only that has saved him from oblivion — not that which drew his crowds, but the telling of Him to come after, that has saved his earthly fame, as it has his heavenly. To-day men are angered because they are told that human power fails where the warning is ended, and only the Christ can forgive and help: and

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they leave, as they left first the Baptist and then His Lord! But where human power fails, there this Christ is found!

DECEMBER SEVENTH

The Master touched the root of all when He said, "Forgive." Your gospel is none without it; mens' hearts will always drag the Church, however recreant, back to the dreadful truth of offence, and long for pardon. Christ came for nothing, if He did not come to bring it: it is not part of the gospel, it is the whole of it. Only one Name given can bring salvation, only one Voice say "Forgive," and make it good, only One can challenge men and angels to test His power, and He never risked that power in a little hand like yours or mine. It was enough when He gave the knowledge of repentance and forgiveness!

DECEMBER EIGHTH

A "word" seems a little thing wherewith to convert a world: but this world never has been, and never can be, led by anything but just that, a "word." A general can lead his army, and beat down opposition, and hold men captives:

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so can a jailer catch and hold them behind iron bars. But when you send them out to live and grow and be men, you must give them some "word," whose wisdom shall lead and guide the growing manhood within. A sword can kill, a shackle can bind, only a *word* can help a human being to live and grow as God means he shall. And only one Man ever dared take that as His name to tell His nature, "the Word."

DECEMBER NINTH

God has faith where man has not. He believes in the seed, that it will spring and grow and bear. God has faith in the seed in His hand, and faith in the soil of your soul and mine. So God ploughs, not to torture, but to plant. And He sows to reap. Join in His faith that in your life it may grow!

DECEMBER TENTH

I do not wonder where human faith falls exhausted and begins to doubt, but let us thank God that while doubt may lessen our use of truth, it does not by any means destroy God's plan or work.

DECEMBER

DECEMBER ELEVENTH

"The fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all." There is no restriction! It means where you are now, and where you were yesterday, and where you will be to-morrow. It means in your homes, making up the endless little things of life, which tax and weary the most patient and purest of Christian women. It means in your private office, where you are making up your books, into which you will not admit the eye of a stranger. But did you have the "fellowship of the Holy Ghost?"

DECEMBER TWELFTH

Not only familiar blessings are apt to be forgotten, but even if extraordinary blessing comes through what wears a familiar aspect, it is so far taken for granted that it produces but little impression upon us, and arouses but scant gratitude.

Anticipation can make us so familiar with a blessing expected that we forget the good God when the blessing is here. We cannot perhaps remember always to be grateful, but I think there are a good many of us who have not much

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room to censure the nine lepers who did not turn back.

And to-day when you are looking for something to thank God for, look back over the most familiar lines of your life and hope, and see how anticipation has stopped you from knowing when blessings have come.

DECEMBER THIRTEENTH

People say, "The Church is bigoted and blind and intolerant." Yes, we are intolerant of assault upon truth. You, our assailants, have some ultimate truth from which you start, and you demand that we shall give up ours and take yours: and we decidedly prefer to take that which "is laid," to taking yours! I decline to give up my belief to the demand of somebody, who is the follower of somebody else: because my faith is the guarded gift of the Church through eighteen centuries.

And besides, there is one person who is always allowed to be narrow, fanatic, anything you please to call it: that is the man or woman who shows in kindly, faithful life that the foundation fact of their whole moral structure, and that on which rests their whole heart-life, in home and

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in the world, is just this same truth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God! A consistent, true and kindly life, built on Christ, silences attack, and challenges respect and reverence. Let us be thankful for the Church's wealth of holy and saintly men and women!

DECEMBER FOURTEENTH

There were no locks on the gates of Paradise, and no police angels to carry the people back when once outside. Men to-day, with position, with good minds and good training, crush everything under their feet, and walk down into pits of ruin in the awful freedom of human choice. Nobody is obliged to keep the Bible, any more than they are obliged to be decent if they choose to be else. But they must decide at their peril. We are here to learn. This is our school-house: and if we reject our spelling books, it is no fault of the School-teacher that we never learn to read. You are to do with your Bible as you do with all life, — choose at your peril.

DECEMBER FIFTEENTH

It is only those who have no enthusiasm who feel their duty to be a dose. Enthusiasm is

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kindled by the Holy Spirit: it is strengthened in prayer: it is fed by the truth of God.

DECEMBER SIXTEENTH

However God acts, He knows how to choose. Miracle has its place, a restricted one, and He uses it but little. But there is one thing without which even He never seems able to work, and that is a whole-souled, honestly consecrated human being. And the nearer that life comes to Him, the better the work will be done.

DECEMBER SEVENTEENTH

Without the lesson of obedience in the Church of God at large, no good work would have been done. But in the individual it is hard for many of us to find it, and especially in ourselves. We grow weary with the repeated effort to fill our own memories with the words of the Christ. The reading of God's word becomes tiresome and a task. Prayer is at times a hard duty, ill-met and of doubtful use. But perhaps at such times we are only filling the jars with water, for a work which only the Greater One can and will do!

DECEMBER

DECEMBER EIGHTEENTH

In all the ages of Christ's Church, the only thing which He has asked is that we fill our own minds with His gracious words of peace and pity and kindness and love, and fill our memories with the story of His life among men, and His death at their hands: till by the touch of the Spirit of all Truth, the Child of Bethlehem, the Boy of Jerusalem, and the Man of Cana shall become the Christ of Lazarus's tomb, the Divine Messenger of the sepulchre and of Olivet!

DECEMBER NINETEENTH

Most of us believe and say that the present is ours, to do as we will with it. By God's blessing the present is ours, and so is the past and so is the future. But the past is not ours to alter, the present is not ours to waste, and the future is not ours to prejudice.

DECEMBER TWENTIETH

It must always be the privilege of a few in quiet life to seek through deep, unrevealed mysteries the secrets of God the Creator in His

DECEMBER

mighty making and keeping. And while some touch this great earth in the search to do no more than throng with the multitudes, others will lay down a reverent hand, and Christ will say, "Some one touched ME, for power is gone out."

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIRST

Did you ever look at the passage, "God loveth a cheerful giver?" Happily for us, Paul does not say that God loves no other givers: he only says He does love cheerful ones. And the word is that from which comes our word, "hilarious." And it helps our estimate. Brethren, I fear there are too many and too few hilarious givers. Too many, where I have seen people hand out their money or put down their names because something was going around the room, and nobody dared, on pain of losing place in the crowd, to refuse to give. And too few, where men can rejoice honestly over a wisely chosen object for the sake of the Child of Bethlehem.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SECOND

In spite of all doubt, in spite of easy irreverence, no spot on this earth is so hallowed in

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memory, over none have been laid the offerings of art in color and song, as have been laid over that spot, where the rudest of earth's buildings was made the dwelling place of the Infant Christ, the Son of God.

God give us to move with the hosts who are moving to see and to wonder, to worship and to give at that manager of old!

DECEMBER TWENTY-THIRD

Each miracle in the history of revelation is only one tiny bit of power and blessed light, which pierces through the walls of our human darkness and need, from the great universe of love and power which encloses us on every side.

Once the rift tore open wide enough for a host of the heavenly choir to rush through and sing ere it closed.

DECEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH

The wonder is in the song of the angels, when and where it came. There is no attempt to elaborate, it is the light of heaven piercing the earth darkened with human wrong, suffering and need. It is the song of heaven breaking in upon

DECEMBER

the triumph of earth to change a battle-song into an oratorio, to help out the melodies of earth, with the harmonies of heaven, it is to insist upon peace and good-will in a life where even an inspired Virgin and Priest could sing of conflict and the delight of conquest!

DECEMBER TWENTY-FIFTH

The one approach to our Maker is through that stream of light with which He approaches us: and that light is the light of LOVE. The whole song of Bethlehem has its inspiration, message and power in the thought of love, infinite and divine, approaching till it reaches the children of men. Admit it or not, use it well or ill, the impulse which excites the atmosphere which at this time we breathe, and which rouses all men, is distinctly and definitely the impulse of love: love divine, more potent to-day than when first the angels sang, and enduring as God is eternal!

May God give us the skill and cunning of love which shall send us to-day somewhere to take a healing gift from God's great Christmas-tree to those about us!

DECEMBER

DECEMBER TWENTY-SIXTH

Probably the very last truth which the apostles learned, the very last to take hold on them, the last to become a power in their lives, was the birth of the little Child in Bethlehem, while the angels sang, Glory to God! It probably took the power of Christ's life, with all the glory of the Resurrection Day and the forty days of His after-life on earth, and the mystery of the Ascension to help these men learn their last lesson: and that lesson is the very first event in the succession of miracle, the conception and birth of Jesus of Nazareth.

And slowly He will teach us the wonder of the birth of that little Child; and He will wait, for God can always wait, for the world to learn it, as it has learned and yet will learn, what the story of Bethlehem has been amid the homes of men the world over.

DECEMBER TWENTY-SEVENTH

There was something in St. John which we all recognize as far different from anybody we know. We can think of him in his own pure moral and spiritual life; but we cannot think of

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